



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

This thesis has been submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree (e.g. PhD, MPhil, DClinPsychol) at the University of Edinburgh. Please note the following terms and conditions of use:

- This work is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, which are retained by the thesis author, unless otherwise stated.
- A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge.
- This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author.
- The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.
- When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

A STUDY OF VIOLENCE AS A LITERARY TECHNIQUE IN THE POETRY
OF GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

by

IAN WILLIAM REVIE

PRESENTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

October 1972



SUMMARY OF THESIS

The thesis is a study of the development of a poetic technique and its increasing importance in the evolution of Apollinaire's poetic styles. In describing the technique as "violence" the thesis offers a definition not only of the technique itself but also of the intentions of the poet both in the composition of the poems and in their final effects.

By analysing and attempting a critical explication of Apollinaire's poetry in chronological order, the thesis thus shows not only the development of the technique but also that this technique constitutes the underlying unity of Apollinaire's poetry which has traditionally been analysed in terms of conflicting influences and intentions. While accepting the importance of the influence of symbolism on the early poetry and even the permanence of certain aspects of this influence, the thesis shows the degree of originality present throughout the evolution of both the early poems and the later poems.

Since supposed influences of the plastic arts, and in particular the development of Cubism, have often been assumed or even shown - although never satisfactorily - to be at the origin of Apollinaire's movement away from symbolism and more traditional forms of poetic expression towards experimental and concrete forms of poetry, the thesis gives due weighting to the presence of the techniques of violence in the early poetry and consequently proves Apollinaire's poetic development to be consistent with himself.

Due emphasis given to the continuity of Apollinaire's techniques as well as to the consistency of such expressions of intent as the poet made, the thesis concludes that the originality of Apollinaire's poetry lies mainly in his exploitation of the techniques of violence.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE	:	Section one : Violence in Literature,	
		A definition	p. 1
		Section two : An examination of relevant	
		statements by Apollinaire	p. 16
CHAPTER TWO	:	<u>Alcools</u>	
		Section one : Introduction	p. 52
		Section two : La Chanson du Mal-Aimé	p. 62
		Section three : Picasso and Max Jacob	p. 70
		Section four: 1907-1908	p. 82
		Section five: Other Poems	p. 155
		Section six : "Zone"	p. 201
CHAPTER THREE	:	<u>Calligrammes</u>	
		Section one : Introduction - "Liens"	p. 222
		Section two : Ondes (A) Les Fenêtres et	
		Lundi Rue Christine	p. 234
		Section three : Ondes (B)	p. 249
		Section four : Ondes (C)	p. 278
		Section five : Etendards (A)	p. 289
		Section six : Etendards (B)	p. 303
		Section seven : The War Poems	p. 312
		Section eight : Case d'Armons and Lueurs	
		des Tirs	p. 340
		Section nine : Obus Couleur de Lune	p. 361
		Section ten : La Tête Etoilée	p. 375
		Section eleven: Appendix -The Calligrammes	p. 459

CHAPTER FOUR : Conclusions

p. 462

BIBLIOGRAPHY :

p. 477

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes to the text :

O.P. = Oeuvres Poétiques

O.C. = Oeuvres Complètes

Adéma = "Guillaume Apollinaire : Le Mal-Aimé"

Adéma (68) = "Guillaume Apollinaire"

Déc. = "Le Dossier d'Alcools" by Michel Décaudin

Durry = "Guillaume Apollinaire Alcools" by Marie-Jeanne Durry

R.L.M. = Revue des Lettres Modernes

Details concerning the place and year of publication of all these works are to be found in the bibliography.

CHAPTER ONE : SECTION ONE

VIOLENCE IN LITERATURE : A DEFINITION

Most criticism of the poetry of Apollinaire has tended to show the diversity of his work - moving from its néo-symbolist beginnings via the Rhenish picturesque to what some have - unwisely - called the later 'cubist' poetry and the calligrammes. For a poet who had Mallarmé, Verlaine and Baudelaire to look back on and who was in turn looked back upon by the surrealists and other innovators of the inter-war period this seems a correct approach - especially from the point of view of the evolution of French poetry over the first decades of the century.

The division between early tendencies gradually sloughed off and later styles slowly evolved has, of course, never been put forward as a clear cut one - indeed the continuity of composition of the last poems of 'Alcools' and the first of 'Calligrammes' has never been in any doubt - but it has equally always been clear that while 'Alcools' was indispensable to any proper consideration of the last throes of symbolism in French poetry, 'Calligrammes' always belonged to the chapter entitled 'New Directions'. No-one could deny that this division exists - even if one of those who has lucidly analysed the differing natures of the two volumes - S.I. Lockerie - has also pointed out the importance of the conception of the nature of poetry and the lasting effects of this, which Apollinaire acquired from symbolist thinking.

"...quand il s'agit pour lui de faire oeuvre durable, de nous laisser un de ses poèmes vraiment marquants, on le voit alors retrouver d'instinct la même conception de la poésie, s'engager dans la même avenue, et tourner autour aussi de la même forme

poétique, qu'il associait sans doute avec tant de grandes entreprises symbolistes admirées à l'époque de ses premières lectures".(1)

The reasons put forward for this development of Apollinaire's poetry have been principally that while it was natural for a young poet to adopt the dominant style of his time, all the major works associated with this having been produced (excepting of course ^{those of} P. Valéry) it was just as imperative for a poet of talent to evolve something new.(2) There also appears to be a consensus of critical opinion that the impact of Picasso and cubism, probably also of Max Jacob and his restless searchings, not to mention the earlier acquaintance with Jarry, were vital factors in the direction which Apollinaire's poetry took. Once again, to deny this would be foolish - the evidence is abundant, and not least among the testimonies Apollinaire's own, frequently and abundantly given.

Other critics such as J. Burgos have shown the permanence and the importance of early themes and intentions - without contradicting basically the evolution we briefly describe. But, except for passing references, it has not properly been demonstrated that there is an important continuity of conception and intention (concerning poetry) in Apollinaire's work and that this has a crucial impact on his techniques and styles - nor, furthermore, has

(1) R.L.M. 1963, série Apollinaire no. 2 "Alcools et le symbolisme".

(2) This assessment is curiously at variance with the popular judgement - if one may so describe any opinion that has received the endorsement of the President of the Republic - that Apollinaire is the last of the traditional Symbolists who also wrote some rather wildly experimental poems of no lasting value.

it really been demonstrated from the body of his poetry that, whatever the undeniably important influences of others, the continuous dynamic and nature of the poetry springs from Apollinaire himself and from what he saw in the work of others (not usually what they themselves saw), from his own conception of the nature of the world and the modes of man's experience of it. It is the purpose of this thesis to develop just such a study.

This study is, then, a critical appreciation and explication of the poetry of Guillaume Apollinaire, with particular emphasis on one aspect which seems to us to be of the highest importance as well as running through the poems from the first to the last, although, naturally enough, changing and developing as it does so. That aspect we have called violence, and it is now time to define our terms.

To begin negatively let us say that by violence we do not mean - except possibly incidentally - anything to do with physical violence, whether in description or as a source of moral or other reflections.

Few who are acquainted with the poetry of Apollinaire would object if the term 'poetry of surprise' were offered as a description of it; but in our opinion it is too weak and inadequate a term and we have therefore preferred to speak of violence. The controversial psychologist R.D. Laing has described the first kiss given by a mother to her new-born child as an act of violence (the first committed against the human being), and without in any way deriving our theories from Laing's ideas of self and relation to others, the apparent paradox of his remark is a useful starting point for a definition of our terms.

Clearly a newly born baby has no control over the outside world and therefore in all its experiences its role is a passive

one. Poetry which acts upon the reader in the same way seems to us to merit the description violent.

It may seem as if this allows the term to be applied to any poem, any work, indeed any line of writing, or signs or symbols - for if one accepts the necessary fact of eyes and brain and experience of the world (the 'model of the world' one carries within) in the translation of these signs, then it must be admitted that the reader does not control the sequence of these signs and therefore passively receives them. Let us clarify this by reference to a few lines of poetry, say, for sake of an example, the beginning of Eliot's 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' :

"Let us go then you and I

When the evening is spread out against the sky

Like a patient etherized upon a table"

The reader's eyes, brain and knowledge (i.e. experience of the world) are necessary to an understanding of these lines. That is to say the poem is read after it is written. Therefore reading is an active thing - but it is not the reader who chooses the words. Therefore if the reader actually supplies the 'you' and 'I' he does so within the limits of these words - wide enough limits - but when we come to the 'patient etherized upon the table' these limits are clearly reduced, particularly as this is a description of evening. Therefore the act of reading is a passive thing also since the limits of it are determined by the text - its order, its juxtapositions especially.

There is no need to take Eliot's lines any further - especially since one of our key ideas has already appeared : that of juxtaposition. Obviously, the more unexpected, the more unusual the sequence of signs, the more passive the role of the reader ; i.e.

the more restricted are the boundaries of his interpretation. Equally obviously there comes a point, beyond which the reader may actively assert himself by simply rejecting the sequence of signs e.g. to read the words 'floor' 'horse' 'telephone' in sequence is not to have any experience which is relevant to the domain of literary criticism, but to read Eliot's lines is.

From this we may evoke one more aspect of the experience which we describe as a kind of violence and that is that it must be meaningful - in however small or strange a way. Just as - to return momentarily to Laing - the kiss is to the child. This is not to say that the words we read must be assimilated by us to our experience of the world - on the contrary they must be something new (again like the kiss) or to take an example from a province much more immediate to our subject, Lautréamont's umbrella and sewing machine upon the operating table.(I) Things which are new, unexpected, therefore surprising, in themselves clearly have this property but so also do transitions from one thing to another : juxtapositions - as we have said - of ideas, pictures etc. not usually juxtaposed.

We have already said, in our initial introduction, that the idea informs the technique and therefore clearly the stranger the manner in which the juxtaposition is brought about the more relevant it is to speak of violence. For example, if instead of comparing the evening to an etherized patient (simile or metaphor)

(I) "Il est beau (....) comme la rencontre fortuite sur une table de dissection d'une machine à coudre et d'un parapluie!" Le Comte de Lautréamont : "Les Chants de Maldoror" Ed. G.L.M., Paris, 1938, pp 256-257

one simply presents to the reader the two poles, as it were, one is doubly justified in speaking of violence since not only the reader's sensibility but also the language is assaulted.

Our argument has so far been almost entirely abstract and it would greatly improve the exposition if we now became more specific and referred directly to the work of Apollinaire. As we said at the very beginning of our argument, the term "surprise" is perfectly acceptable to those who know Apollinaire's poetry, but now we must justify the term "violence". Let us consider the following statement of the historical perspective which comes from M. Décaudin's book on "Alcools"(I) :

"Pendant le XIXème siècle et surtout depuis Baudelaire, la poésie s'était sans doute affranchie de la tradition de la comparaison homérique, de l'image ou de la métaphore filées, fondées sur des identités ou des rapprochements explicables. Elle avait pu devenir obscure, irrationnelle, rechercher des correspondances qui entr'ouvrent cette forêt de symboles qu'est le monde, n'avoir pour seule loi que la musique intérieure, la subjectivité de l'artiste. Mais, si l'on excepte quelques audaces de Rimbaud, certains dévergondages cosmologiques de Laforgue et l'oeuvre unique de Jarry, l'unité de ton était sauvegardée et présidait à l'organisation des images : des "Fleurs du Mal" au symbolisme de Vielé-Griffin, Stuart Merrill ou Verhaeren cette fidélité à une règle indiscutée du goût est constante. Chez Apollinaire, non seulement les images semblent souvent avoir acquis une autonomie telle que rien, pas même le lien le plus ténu, ne semble les rapprocher, mais elles s'assemblent dans une liberté qui paraît

(I) "Le Dossier d'Alcools" p. 57

ne connaître aucun frein et se plaire parfois dans les pires disparates."

Clearly a large part of what we have given as our definition of violence so far is included in M. Décaudin's sketch of the progress of poetry from Baudelaire to Apollinaire. Moreover, Apollinaire's friends readily apply the term "surprise" to his poetry and to his legacy to others :

"Toute la poésie de la période post-apollinarienne a été, et elle reste, une poésie de la surprise. C'est pourquoi Apollinaire peut être considéré à juste titre comme le précurseur des poètes actuels."(1)

This particular instance does not lead us beyond surprise to violence, but the following quotation from Philippe Soupault, one of the young poets, who came to look on Apollinaire, towards the end of his life, as a master, does show that "surprise" is not as simple a word as it appears in Apollinaire's case - "Apollinaire avait le sens de ce qui était neuf. Mais maté par la peur il ne se déclarait jamais révolutionnaire et appelait surprise le scandale. Il aimait pourtant la violence, ce poing en pleine figure, mais il préférait jouer au plus malin. Toute une génération, celle qui précéda la guerre, dut son audace, à cet homme peureux mais fier, qui les poussait dans le dos."

And further on, another statement which is most interesting to us :

"Il savait que cette violence qui est comme un miracle pouvait seule détruire. Mais il voulait détruire pour recréer."(2)

The former of these two statements associates the new with the scandalous or the violent. Looking in fairly general terms at

(1) André Billy, "Guillaume Apollinaire", Paris, S.D., p. 38

(2) "Guillaume Apollinaire ou ^{les}reflets de l'incendie", p. 37-38

Apollinaire's life, one may illustrate this statement by referring to his support of the Cubists, an episode in which, clearly, Apollinaire's sense of what was valuable in the new led him into scandalous conflict with the accepted opinion of his day ; but this has no direct reference to his poetry.

However, if we apply the statement to Apollinaire's poetry, and there is no doubt at all that Soupault was referring to both Apollinaire's career and his writing, then this alliance of what is new with what is shocking and violent is most interesting to us. A new representation of something, as the photograph is a new point of view on the situation discussed earlier, may be achieved in a painting and may be achieved in a poetic image, and the newness alone may be enough for us to say that this representation is violent. As an example of the paintings, one might consider, say, almost any cubist still life ; as an example of the poetic image, one might consider the famous lines from "Zone" :

"C'est le Christ qui monte au ciel mieux que les aviateurs
Il détient le record du monde pour la hauteur"(I)

These lines are a new representation of the ascension of Christ and they serve our purpose admirably, for it is essentially the newness of them that is violent. The first thing that strikes the reader on seeing these lines is that they are intended to shock through their blasphemousness, yet one is forced to ask if the image of Christ as an airman is any more blasphemous than the image of Christ who can fly like a bird (even if He is not pictured with wings like the angels) which is the traditional image of Christian art. Of course these lines are not simply a representation

(I) "Zone" O.P., p. 40

of the ascension of Christ, they are much more than that, but this will be seen when we come to analyse this poem in the next chapter.

What Soupault says about Apollinaire never referring to violence is true, and anyone who questions his assertion that Apollinaire really was afraid to say all that he meant when he used the term surprise should refer to Marcel Adéma's biography, especially the chapters concerning Apollinaire's activities after his trepanation - the period in which the document "L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes" was composed. Apollinaire in all probability coated his pill of violence with the sugar of such references as he made to the need for common sense and order in his speech - he was afraid that his past as a leading figure in the international avant-garde would count against him in the hyper-patriotic atmosphere of a country at war ; and he could, in theory, have been sent back to join his regiment even if not on active service.

The example of a violent poetic image which we have given above has served to illustrate the importance of the new in our definition of violence in literature ; the poet who shows us something new, or a new aspect of something known, is altering our concept of the world, by definition, and in many cases he may be said to be doing violence to it ; the example quoted being a case in point. Another of the important aspects of what we call violence in poetry is the way in which the poet may set up his own, or the poem's own, universe with its own laws ; and to this aspect the second of the quotations from Soupault is appropriate. The author of a fairy story may be said to create his own universe, in which the impossible in everyday life becomes the commonplace, but this world is created not by destruction, not by violence, but simply

by allusion to a set of conventions concerning the world of supernatural or mythical creatures, which is a generally accepted alternative to another set of conventions which we use as a frame of reference for our normal everyday perceptions of reality. (Broadly speaking any story beginning "Once upon a time" may relate events of any nature without being unfavourably compared to reality - the opening phrase is a signal that one set of conventions is being abandoned.) On the other hand, Apollinaire has recourse to what we would call imagery of violence, in order to destroy the accepted world, the world of reality, and to replace it by the world of the poem. An example of this would be the beginning of "L'Emigrant de Landor Road" :

"Le chapeau à la main il entra du pied droit
 Chez un tailleur très chic et fournisseur du roi
 Ce commerçant venait de couper quelques têtes
 De mannequins vêtus comme il faut qu'on se vête" (I)

The unreal, or possibly "surreal", atmosphere of this poem is not created by a beginning such as "Once upon a time..." but by the absurd attention to detail in the first line and the unreality of the third and fourth - one might almost say anti-reality, for at the back of one's mind as one reads these lines is the "real situation", which one might describe as follows :- A man, holding his hat in his hand, goes into a very fashionable tailor's shop, which has a window display (or interior display) of clothes on headless dummies. But Apollinaire's lines are not a way of referring to this "reality" ; they are calculated to destroy it and to replace it by an image of that situation, in such a way that the image is

much more important than the reality, of which we may see it as an expression. Thus we might say that the image is surreal, since it is a reality of its own, which is more important to the reader of the poem than the reality described above. In this way Apollinaire establishes an atmosphere, a world, and from this point he can go on in the third stanza to set out the real subject of the poem :

"Mon bateau partira demain pour l'Amérique

Et je ne reviendrai jamais"

The two aspects of violence which we have so far illustrated bring us to a very important point in our definition, for while the second example which we have quoted can be seen as taking its "raison d'être" from the need to create the atmosphere of the poem - i.e. the violence in this case is functional, has a definite purpose ; the first example, the lines from "Zone" do not come from the beginning of the poem, are not required to create the atmosphere of the poem (not even for the religious theme of the poem, as this has already been done) and therefore they may be said to be a use of violence for the sake of violence. The poet's object is to shock and to surprise his reader - not to make us look anew at the Ascension - and this leads us to consider surprise as a value in itself and not just as a concomitant of what is new (this being the way in which we approached this particular example). It is surely no less desirable an aim on an author's part to want to surprise his readers than it is to want to please them, and this is certainly the experience which one has on reading many of Apollinaire's short stories. André Fonteyne in his admirable study(I)

(I) "Apollinaire Prosateur" p. 78

of Apollinaire as a prose writer has said :

"Si ... on peut parler de surprise à la lecture de contes tels que "Le Sacrilège" ou "L'Hérésiarque" est-ce affaire d'expression? Ou n'est-ce pas plutôt l'effet de l'originalité des sujets, qui n'échappent à l'extravagance que de justesse, grâce au clin d'oeil narquois d'un auteur qui n'est pas dupe."

- and while we are not here concerned with the prose works of Apollinaire, one may surely see them as a parallel in some respects to his poetry. One finds, then, a certain strand of surprise for the sake of surprise in Apollinaire's poetry which corresponds not only to Soupault's description - "Il aimait pourtant la violence, ce poing en pleine figure..." - but also to the description of Apollinaire's nature which has been given by Marcel Adéma, and which is confirmed by all his friends.

However, in the majority of cases the distinction between surprise as a value in itself and as a mere concomitant of the new does not arise, as, for Apollinaire, the role of the poet was to seize upon anything that changed the aspect of reality, such as a scientific wonder like the aeroplane, or to change for himself, like a magician, the aspect of reality ; this can be clearly seen from the next section, in which Apollinaire's ideas and theories are discussed.

Considering violence to have a definite function, from the author's point of view, now leads us to see it as a means of preserving the purity of the poem ; of enabling the author to make the reader experience more closely what he wishes him to, instead of allowing the reader to assimilate the poem to his own experience, to understand and to interpret it in terms of that experience, and so, perhaps, to miss the essence of what the poet desires to

communicate. Expressed otherwise, one might say that violence is a means of circumventing the necessity of suspension of disbelief.

An area in which it is easy to see the gist of the above statement is specifically the area of the language of the poem. More attention is likely to be drawn to the form of the poem if it is written in free verse than if it is written in regular metres ; but more important than the violation of conventional verse forms is the violation of conventional use of language or of poetic use of language. While the departure from a certain structure of line or of verse form will in time come to be accepted, even to be the norm, what one individual poet does to the normal structure and use of the language is very unlikely to become common usage and it will consequently retain its power to shock for as long as it remains comprehensible to those who speak and read that language. We are already sufficiently far away from the period when "vers libre" was new to find nothing surprising in its use, to say nothing of the Romantic version of the classical alexandrine, whereas the elliptical syntax of, say, a Nerval retains all its power and strangeness.

Thus when Apollinaire expresses the final image of "Zone" in the form -

"Soleil cou coupé"

- the violation which normal usage and form of expression has undergone retains all its power long after one has ceased to find anything remarkable in the fact that the line is of no acknowledged regular form nor does it rhyme with anything. As far as suspension of disbelief is concerned, it is a concept totally irrelevant to the reader's experience of the above image ; one cannot avoid the association of the sun and the headless neck ; the simple juxta-

position of the most basic linguistic element used to designate both has by-passed our normal assimilation of the meaning that words contain. But in the case of what is virtually the same image, only expressed in a more conventional fashion, we accept the image as a conceit :

"Plus tard une tête coupée
 Au bord d'un marécage
 O pâleur de mon ennemi
 C'était une tête d'argent
 Et dans le marais
 C'était la lune qui luisait" (I)

Granted, the delaying of the revelation that the head is in fact the moon does retain an element of surprise which makes the image more effective than it would have been if the comparison had been explicit from the beginning, but the effect pales into insignificance beside the image from "Zone". In this case we accept the image or not as we please, in the other we have no choice, it is forced upon us.

One might therefore speak of a double violence in the case of the image from "Zone" as the normal use of language has been violated and also the reader's mind has been violated by the power of the image. But, of course, the two are inseparable.

That Apollinaire was especially aware of the need for the poem to evade an easy categorisation by the reader's mind might also be deduced from the fact that he experimented with calligrammes, thereby attempting to give to his poetry the same order or quality of being as the paintings of his friends. It was in fact his

(I) "Les Soupirs du Servant de Dakar" O.P., p. 235

intention to publish the actual calligrammes themselves, which he at that time called "Idéogrammes", in a separate volume entitled "Et moi aussi je Suis peintre".

Our definition of violence in poetry is then, with respect to the work of Apollinaire, that it is a deliberate attempt upon the writer's part to endow the form of his language, or the content of his imagery, or the structure of his poem, or any combination of these three things, with such a force that they impose themselves upon the reader's mind with or without his consent. Since the word deliberate has a considerable importance in this definition, our next requirement will be to discern where, if at all, Apollinaire set out an awareness of the ideas discussed above.

CHAPTER ONE : SECTION TWO

AN EXAMINATION OF RELEVANT STATEMENTS BY APOLLINAIRE.

It will be our aim in this section to try to define Apollinaire's awareness of the concept of violence in literature, as we have defined it in section one. In order to do this we shall conduct our examination in a reverse chronological order, beginning with the writings of the period from 1916 to 1918. Our reasons for doing this are firstly that this period is the most fertile in statements about poetry, and secondly that we shall show that these statements coincide to a great degree with the definition of the concept of violence which we have given. We shall then return to the earliest statements made by Apollinaire and proceed from that point to examine any essential differences in his first ideas concerning poetry, tracing the evolution, if any, of those ideas up to the position which the poet takes up in the last years of his life. Once we have shown what was Apollinaire's attitude to violence as a literary device, the way will be open for us to proceed to an examination of the poetry itself.

The texts, then, which will concern us initially are :-

- (1) - the speech which was published shortly after Apollinaire's death in the form of a manifesto - "L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes";
- (2) - the prologue to the play "Les Mamelles de Tirésias";
- (3) - those poems in the section of "Calligrammes" entitled "La Tête Étoilée" which can be considered as an ars poetica ; and
- (4) - the poem "Les Collines" which is to be found in the section "Ondes" of "Calligrammes", a section which contains poems composed before the outbreak of the war. We include this last poem with the others because it seems to us that the hypothesis advanced by Mr

Scott Bates (1) according to which the poem belongs to the period 1916-1917 is highly probable, and that further proof of this should result from the ensuing analysis as well as from the analysis of the poem in section ten of chapter three.

In all of the works which we have named above, Apollinaire calls for a new poetry, completely different from the old, but nonetheless a poetry which will be a continuation of the traditions of French poetry. Apollinaire considered that the only way in which a tradition could truly be continued was for it to be renewed, for in his view, the copying of old forms of art was not only pointless, it was totally irrelevant to the modern artist. The following quotations concerning the painting of André Derain will show how clearly Apollinaire formulated this view :

"Dans les ouvrages d'André Derain que l'on expose aujourd'hui on reconnaîtra donc un tempérament audacieux et discipliné. Et toute une partie récente de son oeuvre garde la trace toujours émouvante des efforts qu'il a fallu pour concilier ces deux tendances."

" ... et les audaces des peintres français durant tout le XIXème siècle sont avant tout des efforts pour retrouver la tradition authentique de l'art." (2)

Clearly a large part of the artist's role was, in the eyes of Apollinaire, to dare to take risks, and so, paradoxically, the way in which tradition was to be continued was by forgetting many of the things which were held to be an inalienable part of

(1) "Les Collines - Dernier testament d'Apollinaire", R.L.M. 1962, série Apollinaire no. I

(2) Chroniques d'Art, p. 423 & p. 422

traditional art and poetry, for one continues the spirit and not the form of art. Thus Apollinaire could cry :

"Et tant d'univers s'oublient

Quels sont les grands oublieurs

Qui donc saura nous faire oublier telle ou telle partie du
/monde

Où est le Christophe Colomb à qui l'on devra l'oubli d'un
/continent" (1)

What must be left behind, what must be forgotten is what is old. The poet must always look for what is new, because the truth is always new and the poet through his experiments will reveal it. Apollinaire proclaims himself a poetic Aladdin offering new lamps for old :

"Le poète, par la nature même de ces explorations, est isolé dans le monde nouveau où il entre le premier, et la seule consolation qui lui reste c'est que les hommes, finalement, ne vivant que de vérités, malgré les mensonges dont ils les matelassent, il se trouve que le poète seul nourrit la vie où l'humanité trouve cette vérité." (2)

We find that Apollinaire is not so much concerned with the role of the artist as a moralist, but rather as a seeker after truth because truth, to him, is the essential aspect of reality. There are here two basic strands of Apollinaire's thought which are woven together - the artist, the poet, is the creator of what is real, although not in any sense of formal imitation of nature ; and also all that is new is an essential part of what is real

(1) "Toujours" O.P., p. 237

(2) "L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes" O.C., t. 3, p. 908

because it is something which has not been revealed to us before. Therefore the role of the poet is to look for the truth of new things, of new experience, and to convey this to the reader. This is a God-like conception of the role of the poet as creator, and we find Apollinaire at pains to point out the importance of the creative role :

"C'est que poésie et création ne sont qu'une même chose ; on ne doit appeler poète que celui qui invente, celui qui crée, dans la mesure où l'homme peut créer. Le poète est celui qui découvre de nouvelles joies, fussent-elles pénibles à supporter. On peut être poète dans tous les domaines : il suffit que l'on soit aventureux et que l'on aille à la découverte." (1)

Such is the creative power of the poet that the images he creates have a prophetic force, for the creatures of the poet's imagination are, like Icarus' wings, the scientific realities of tomorrow. The poet is like a mountain, able to overlook the plain of the future (hence the title "Les Collines") and predict what is to come :

"Sache que je parle aujourd'hui

Pour annoncer au monde entier

Qu'enfin est né l'art de prédire" (2)

But the poet's ability to do this is conditional upon his ability to be a genuine creator, and the key to this lies in breaking with the old, in order to reveal to the reader the new. This revelation of the new always comes as a surprise or shock to the reader and of this Apollinaire was fully aware, for, speaking of "l'esprit

(1) Ibid. p. 907

(2) "Les Collines" O.P.p. 171

nouveau", he says :

"Nous l'avons établi sur les solides bases du bon sens et de l'expérience, qui nous ont amenés à n'accepter les choses et les sentiments que selon la vérité, et c'est selon la vérité que nous les admettons, ne cherchant point à rendre sublime ce qui est ridicule ou réciproquement. Et de ces vérités il résulte le plus souvent la surprise, puisqu'elles vont contre l'opinion communément admise. Beaucoup de ces vérités n'avaient pas été examinées. Il suffit de les dévoiler pour causer une surprise." (I)

Clearly, Apollinaire is here describing one of the basic aspects of violence in literature as we have defined it. But not only does he recognize the effect of surprise the new will have upon the reader, he goes further, advocating the use of surprise as the principal means available to the poet, and indicates that this is what distinguishes the new from the old in literature :

"Mais le nouveau existe bien, sans être un progrès. Il est tout dans la surprise. L'esprit nouveau est également dans la surprise. C'est ce qu'il y a en lui de plus vivant, de plus neuf. La surprise est le grand ressort nouveau. C'est par la surprise, par la place importante qu'il fait à la surprise, que l'esprit nouveau se distingue de tous les mouvements littéraires qui l'ont précédé." (2)

The explorer-poet will, of course, be free, indeed will be forced, to create a new language, itself an instrument of shock, to be the vehicle for the new poetry :

"A l'institut des jeunes aveugles on a demandé

N'avez-vous point de jeune aveugle ailé

(I) "L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes" p. 906

(2) Ibid. p. 906

O bouches l'homme est à la recherche d'un nouveau langage
 Auquel le grammairien d'aucune langue n'aura rien à dire
 Et ces vieilles langues sont tellement près de mourir
 Que c'est vraiment par habitude et manque d'audace
 Qu'on les fait encore servir à la poésie

+ + +

Mais entêtons-nous à parler

Remuons la langue

Lançons des postillons

On veut de nouveaux sons de nouveaux sons de nouveaux sons

On veut des consonnes sans voyelles

Des consonnes qui pètent sourdement

Imitez le son de la toupie

Laissez pétiller un son nasal et continu

Faites claquer votre langue

Servez-vous du bruit sourd de celui qui mange sans civilité

Le raclement aspiré du crachement ferait aussi une belle

/consonne

Les divers pets labiaux rendraient aussi vos discours

/claironnants

Habituez-vous à roter à volonté" (I)

It is surely unnecessary to point out how surprising this passage would be to the literary audience of 1918, or indeed to a present day one, but what is especially worthy of note is that Apollinaire is perfectly willing to include in his poetry the vulgar, the ridiculous, even the disgusting, and not simply because they were

(I) "La Victoire" O.P., p. 309

shocking, but because he believed there was a place for them in the art of the twentieth century. "L'Esprit nouveau" was for Apollinaire complex enough to embrace all aspects of modern man, especially that side of him that had hitherto been excluded from all art ; in this he openly acknowledges his predecessor Alfred Jarry :

"Nous avons vu depuis Alfred Jarry le rire s'élever des basses régions où il se tordait et fournir au poète un lyrisme tout neuf. Où est le temps où le mouchoir de Desdemone paraissait d'un ridicule inadmissible? Aujourd'hui, le ridicule même est poursuivi, on cherche à s'en emparer et il a sa place dans la poésie, parce qu'il fait partie de la vie au même titre que l'héroïsme et tout ce qui nourrissait jadis l'enthousiasme des poètes." (I)

Clearly, Apollinaire is defining his position as one in which the ideas of good and bad taste are only relevant when they apply to the distinctions that his readers would make, so that certain images or words "in bad taste" would be shocking to them. The whole complex nature of man must be open to the artist to explore and if this is so then he will in consequence shock, even wound, by what he reveals ; but this only serves to prove the validity of what he is saying. To reveal the unknown, to give substance to the intangible, these are the tasks of the poet and his creative means is, above all else, violence.

There is a distinction which Apollinaire himself does not make, and therefore presumably did not consider important, but which it is prudent to draw attention to here ; this is the

(I) "L'Esprit Nouveau" p. 905

distinction between surprise as a value, an end in itself, and surprise as a by-product, as it were, of something that is new or unknown. If we consider the sequence which we quoted above, concerning the renewal of language, it is clear that Apollinaire saw both aspects of shock images as necessarily woven together, for language is a vehicle for the communication of the poet's ideas, but it is a vehicle which itself shapes and forms part of those ideas. Thus, in advocating the use of various noises, which are considered vulgar, as sounds in a new language, Apollinaire is seeking an identity of form and content. In other words, for Apollinaire, saying something new could just as well mean saying in a new way something which had been said before, as it could mean talking about something which was new in itself.

Thus, while part of the new poetry is summed up in these lines from "La Jolie Rousse" -

"Nous voulons vous donner de vastes et d'étranges domaines
Où le mystère en fleurs s'offre à qui veut le cueillir
Il y a des feux nouveaux des couleurs jamais vues
Mille phantasmes impondérables
Auxquels il faut donner de la réalité" (1)

- there is the other part which is more obviously brought out in the following quotation from "Les Collines" :

"Et je pèle pour mes amis
L'orange dont la saveur est
Un merveilleux feu d'artifice" (2)

The surprise is a double value and is achieved by a double effect,

(1) "La Jolie Rousse" O.P., p. 313

(2) "Les Collines" O.P., p. 176

for we react to the manner in which the poet describes the flavour of an orange as a firework, but the orange itself is a symbol of surprise, or rather of the imagery of surprise. This is seen not only from the fact that the above quotation is preceded by a sequence which is intended to be the result of the imagination transfiguring reality, which is then commented upon in the lines above (1), it may also be seen from the way in which Apollinaire speaks of the orange in the following quotations :

"La fenêtre s'ouvre comme une orange

Le beau fruit de la lumière" (2)

"Si l'on dev~~ra~~it comparer l'oeuvre d'Henri Matisse à quelque chose, il faudrait choisir l'orange. Comme elle l'oeuvre d'Henri Matisse est un fruit de lumière éclatante." (3)

In both these images Apollinaire is revealing the impression he had of the power of an orange to stand as a visual symbol of something striking, and when we are aware of this it is easier for us to see the full value of the orange in the image from "Les Collines".

The distinction, then, which some would make between surprise as a value and surprise as a mere concomitant is not on the whole relevant to Apollinaire's work. But there are certain aspects of the use of shock tactics, which exploit surprise in a rather different way and of this usage it is right to say that the poet was using surprise as a weapon, for we find him employing certain lines, certain images in such a way as to increase the autonomy of his

(1) cf. the analysis of these lines in Ch. 3 section 10 pp.432-436

(2) "Les Fenêtres" O.P., p. 169

(3) "Chroniques d'Art" p. 430 - this might also be seen as evidence for dating the image from "Les Collines" as 1916-1918.

poem, to free it from a possible interpretation by the reader. This particular aspect of the techniques of violence never found expression in Apollinaire's theoretical writing and so the best place to discuss it is perhaps not here but in the chapters concerning the imagery. Suffice it to say for the moment that Apollinaire's love of strange and exotic words is perhaps an example of this. His early notebooks reveal various notes concerning certain unusual words, some of which appear later in poems, where their effect on the reader can only be to assert the independence of what he is reading from his own experience, which might otherwise become a restrictive factor in his interpretation of the poem.(1)

Finally, we turn to an often quoted passage from the prologue to "Les Mamelles de Tirésias", which we wish to use in order to illustrate another aspect of Apollinaire's awareness of what we have called violence in literature, and we wish to examine this passage, as is not often done, in its context as part of a prologue to a play :

"Le grand déploiement de notre art moderne

Mariant souvent sans lien apparent comme dans la vie

Les sons les gestes les couleurs les cris les bruits" (2)

This passage, as we have said, has often been quoted as a kind of apology for the discontinuous poetry which Apollinaire wrote, and clearly it does refer to the kind of poetic experience which he sought in poems such as "Lundi Rue Christine"(3), but it is not

(1) "Le Brasier" offers a good example of such lines: cf. Ch.2 sec.4

(2) O.P., p. 881

(3) cf. Ch. 3 sec. 2(A)

often taken into consideration that Apollinaire is here referring to his idea of the theatre as embodied in a particular performance. This does not mean that we wish to restrict the significance of this passage, on the contrary, we wish to extend the ideas which it conveys. If we examine the lines quoted and the lines which immediately follow :

"La musique la danse l'acrobatie la poésie la peinture

Les chœurs les actions et les décors multiples

Vous trouverez ici des actions

Qui s'ajoutent au drame principal et l'ornent (our underli-

Et l'usage raisonnable des invraisemblances" /ning

- then we find that the poet, concerned with the total effect of the play as a spectacle is quite prepared to incorporate some elements for their own sake, and the effect which he hopes to derive from these elements is one of surprise - one opposed to the strictly utilitarian attitude towards what takes place on stage in relation to the plot and main action. This is an attitude which is to be found in his poetry also.

We find with certain lines of Apollinaire's poetry that they contribute to the total effect of the poem while being without apparent direct relation to either the main theme or the general structure of the imagery. In a poem such as "Zone" (which, it is true, does not belong to the period 1916-1918, but will serve as an example) we find a structure which lends itself to this kind of exploitation. The poet wandering through Paris is free to incorporate any detail of the scene before him as part of his poem without it bearing any specific relation to the themes of unrequited love and the role of religion. Thus the lines such as -

"Maintenant tu marches dans Paris tout seul parmi la foule

Des trousseaux d'autobus mugissants près de toi roulent"

- apart from being lines which situate the poet and which contribute to the humour of the poem, are also random details which contribute to the total effect of discontinuity, of fragmentation of experience.

It is quite clear that the sum of all the aspects of poetry which we have found thus formulated in Apollinaire's writings contribute to a specific awareness of what we have called the concept of violence as a literary device in some if not all of its aspects. This is not yet the place to explore the differences which may exist between Apollinaire's theories and ours, for we have yet to examine the theories in action ; this will be done in chapters two and three in which we shall be analysing the imagery in its own right. From this point we now turn to look at the beginning of Apollinaire's career as a poet - a period which, not surprisingly, does^{not} afford a great deal of theoretical writing for us to examine, but which we may nevertheless look at from a slightly different angle.

Being born in the age he was, it would have been very strange indeed if the poetry of Apollinaire did not bear the marks of symbolism. And while we are not concerned to analyse in detail here the question of whether or not Apollinaire was a symbolist poet, we are concerned to show to some extent the traces of symbolist ideas in his poetry. Apart from the fact that Apollinaire himself acknowledged a debt to the symbolist masters, in an article entitled "La Poésie Symboliste" which he published in 1909 in "La Phalange Nouvelle"(I overleaf) - which is but one indication that by that time he had to some extent moved away from his symbolist

beginnings - other critics have shown in greater detail than the space available to us permits that the influence of symbolism upon Apollinaire was very strong. In particular S.I. Lockerie has put forward a well argued case for the permanence of this influence upon Apollinaire :

"Ce que je voudrais avancer, c'est que la jeunesse d'Apollinaire avait été tellement marquée par ses lectures des poètes symbolistes que dès le début il était acquis à une conception de la poésie qui en faisait surtout une chasse spirituelle. De là le fait que tant d'avenues poétiques lui étaient fermées ou ne le tentaient pas -poésie satirique etc (...) quand il s'agit pour lui de faire oeuvre durable, de nous laisser un de ses poèmes vraiment marquants, on le voit alors retrouver d'instinct la même conception de la poésie, s'engager dans la même avenue, et tourner autour aussi de la même forme poétique, qu'il associait sans doute avec tant de grandes entreprises symbolistes admirées à l'époque de ses premières lectures." (2)

If this is the case, and few critics would differ at least on the point of the initial influence of symbolism, then we must not expect to find the young Apollinaire formulating any statements about poetry which differ radically from the doctrines of symbolism - especially anything as radically different as the concept of/

(1) "C'est aux symbolistes que Verlaine et Mallarmé ont transmis la tradition qui un moment était devenue le Parnasse. Les symbolistes furent les premiers objets de nos enthousiasmes et tous ceux qui, depuis 1895, ont créé de la poésie doivent de la reconnaissance aux maîtres aimés du symbolisme."

(2) R.L.M. 1963, série Apollinaire no.2 "Alcools et le symbolisme"

violence in literature. Nonetheless, we shall see in the next chapter that even in his most symbolist poems the techniques of violence have some part.

What little literary and art criticism Apollinaire did write at the beginning of the century (for our purposes this means 1900-1904) is largely marked by the eclecticism of its author's tastes, and his willingness to appreciate artistic endeavour which was totally different from his own, a characteristic which he retained throughout his life. Which is not to say that he appreciated everything equally because he had no taste of his own or that his position was one of ignorance ; on the contrary the ideas which were to shape the future development of his poetry and art criticism were already beginning to crystallise, and that largely as a result of his own reflection rather than external influences, as Breunig observes in his introduction to Apollinaire's collected art criticism :

"Il faut croire qu'en fait de peinture et de sculpture, Apollinaire était presque entièrement autodidacte. A Paris en 1901, avant son départ pour l'Allemagne, il aurait assisté aux séances du Collège d'esthétique d'art moderne, à en croire Maurice Leblond, et c'est là vraisemblablement que sous l'influence du naturisme s'est affirmé son attachement encore assez intermittent au "merveilleux moderne" qui quelque mois plus tard lui fera évoquer la tour Eiffel devant la cathédrale de Cologne."(1)

Certainly, Apollinaire did not lack confidence in the art of his time, even before he saw what that art would be :

".... notre époque verra en France et en Algérie une floraison

(1) "Chroniques d'Art" Introduction (Breunig) p. 9

d'oeuvres belles, telles que seul le dix-septième siècle harmonieux et classique sera comparable au vingtième siècle plus harmonieux et plus classique, de même que seuls les nobles efforts du seizième siècle comptent au regard des efforts admirables, des tentatives grandioses du dix-neuvième siècle."(1)

It would perhaps not be inappropriate to justify briefly at this point our use of certain quotations from Apollinaire's essays and articles on painters and their work to illustrate his attitude to his own poetry. In fact many critics, Braque among them, have pointed out that Apollinaire most commonly saw in a work of art that which interested him personally, which was not always the most important aspect of that work in the eyes of its creator. This is a point to which we shall return, but it is clear from the frequent statements which Apollinaire made concerning the role of the artist/poet that he equated their functions although he was always careful to draw a rigorous distinction between the media in which they operate. Thus the foregoing quotation may be seen as an expression of confidence in himself as much as in his contemporaries, and also, significantly as an expression of confidence in the new, in the possibilities which the artistic and literary schisms of the previous century had opened up for the present one.

This first and important aspect of his later theories is the only one which we find formulated at this stage of his career, although his poems themselves show evidence of a more complete kind that he was already working towards the effect of his later style.(2) We should not, however, consider this surprising, as

(1) "La Grande France" O.C., t.4, p. 773

(2) cf. Ch.2 secs. I & 2

there exists almost no formulation of any poetic doctrine whatsoever among Apollinaire's writings of this period ; but then, how many young poets are confident or mature enough to begin their careers with a manifesto ; these tend to be more the result of schools or groups than of individuals working on their own, which was Apollinaire's case. He had not yet established more than very tentative contacts with the literary milieu and in any case it was not really in his nature to be part of a school. This is something that can be seen quite clearly from "L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes", which is not the manifesto of any group, but rather, when Apollinaire is generalising and not speaking about his own work, is an attempt to define the directions of modern art and literature as Apollinaire saw them in the work of his contemporaries - as well as his own poetry, of course. It should be remembered that this document was written at a time when Apollinaire was being acclaimed by a younger generation of poets and if this has led certain critics to write that he appeared at that time as the leader of a group, then this is only true from an external point of view - that is from the literary critic's retrospective viewpoint or, perhaps, from the point of view of those young poets themselves, but not from Apollinaire's point of view.(1)overleaf)

However, to return to the period with which we are immediately concerned, this willingness to accept the "beau nouveau" is already present in the poetry which Apollinaire was writing in Germany :

"Dôme merveilleux entre les merveilles du monde

La tour Eiffel et le Palais de Rosemonde"(2)overleaf)

- and that, as we shall see, is an aspect of considerable importance in the aesthetic ideas which he was later to develop. However,

of the variety of influences affecting his poetry, there was perhaps one, and this in no way a theoretical influence, which more than the others shaped his style and probably held up the development of his ideas. That influence was the overwhelming need he felt for as direct an expression as possible of his feelings arising from his unhappy affair with Annie Playden. If one looks at the poems which Apollinaire wrote from the time of their encounter to the moment when other influences began to exercise

- (I) cf. Aragon : "Pour avoir dérobé le feu au ciel, l'arc-en-ciel, l'Hérésiarque vient de mourir. Juste châtement d'une vie qui se maintint toujours dans les royaumes défendus de la magie.(...)

La légende se créait autour de lui, nimbe doré qu'on voit aux césars de Byzance. D'elle seule je me souviendrai, soucieux biographe de l'unique beauté qu'il semait sur ses pas, pour que péricule à tout jamais ce cadavre d'homme privé, et que subsiste au creux du chêne l'enchanteur Apollinaire dont la voix sans bouche exaltera les adolescents des générations futures à la quête ardente et passionnée des essences inconnues qui mieux que les alcools du passé enivreront demain." "Sic" jan.-fév. 1919 nos. 37-39

But on the other hand, aware of Apollinaire's independence : Lucien Descaves (in the same issue) : "Il allait nulle part porté par la foule, et il ne cherchait pas à faire école, tellement il était soucieux avant tout de conserver à ses mouvements d'esprit leur aisance naturelle."

- (2) "Le Dôme de Cologne" O.P., p. 538

a stronger claim on him, that is to say between 1906 and 1907 (I), one finds the presence of Annie inescapable. Forced into writing his poetry under the direct and powerful stimulus of an emotional need, he was left with little time to develop his ideas on poetry and the role of the poet.

The result of this obsession with Annie was inevitable, though fortunately mitigated by the positive influence of Picasso and others ; Apollinaire's writing simply dried up as he found himself possessed by a single thought, on which he had already produced several fine poems. Moreover his companions had no shortage of ideas, and he must have begun to feel himself inferior

(I) cf. Déc. p. 207 : "Apollinaire considère comme une époque d'engourdissement la période pendant laquelle toute sa poésie est nourrie de la pensée d'Annie - approximativement de la fin 1901 à la fin 1906. (...) Sauf quelques exceptions, son inspiration, ironique ou sentimentale, le ramène cependant toujours au thème de la séparation et de la solitude. A partir de 1907, il se sent au contraire une âme nouvelle. Ses ambitions antérieures, ces poèmes si grandioses qu'il a dû les laisser inachevés, nous n'en trouvons pas trace dans ce que nous connaissons de son oeuvre, mais ne s'agirait-il pas du premier projet, qui semble si ambitieux, de l'Enchanteur Pourrissant, qui peut bien être dit poème?

Il n'est plus question maintenant de satisfaire à un excessif souci de perfection et à l'art poétique : la poésie est dans la vie même de l'homme, dans sa sensibilité, et dans le regard qu'il jette sur le monde. Expérience capitale, dans laquelle se découvrent les véritables valeurs poétiques."

to them. During 1906 and most of 1907 he published nothing. Clearly he was undergoing a crisis of serious proportions, and when the "Revue Littéraire de Paris et de Champagne" sent him, as a young writer of some reputation, a questionnaire including an inquiry about his own work, he replied that he did not consider that he had written anything of any significance, and this at a time when he had already written "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé", which he was not ashamed to publish about three years later when he had regained his confidence in himself. While he may have held certain ideas of what poetry should be, he never formulated them properly at this time, and tended to consider all means of poetic expression equally valid, indeed his replies to the above mentioned questionnaire are woolly and imprecise in all cases (I).

The year 1907 was for him a vigorous re-awakening and we shall attempt to show what new spirit came to him and how this found expression at this time in a period of extremely fruitful activity. In August of this year Apollinaire published the poem that was eventually to become "La Maison des Morts" under the title of "L'Obituaire", and this was the public beginning to a re-launching

(I) Consider the following : "Je suis pour un art de fantaisie, de sentiment et de pensée, aussi éloigné que possible de la nature avec laquelle il ne doit avoir rien de commun. C'est, je crois, l'art de Racine, de Baudelaire, de Rimbaud." If, in calling for an art, which has nothing to do with nature, Apollinaire seems to be already on the lines which lead to "surnaturalisme" and "surréalisme", then the qualification which he puts on this statement does not really allow us to say that he had gone far in thinking out his ideas.

of his career. "Lul de Faltenin" followed and then came the year of 1908 in which he attempted his most ambitious poems so far - "Onirocritique", "Le Pyrée" ("Le Brasier"), and "Les Fiançailles"(1). At this time Apollinaire was assisting at the birth of Cubism, he was also in close contact with the neo-symbolist group of "La Phalange" ; in addition to these intellectual stimuli, in 1907 he met Marie Laurencin and his belief in love was renewed. In this intense atmosphere someone of Apollinaire's temperament could not fail to respond in a way just as intense. The richness and the density of the poems mentioned above is brought out in the appropriate section, but here we wish to see what ideas these poems hold, what expression there is in them of the ideas which are present in the various writings discussed at the beginning of this section. Apart from the form of the poem, which is an obvious affirmation of the poet's belief in free verse, we find the lines -

"Pardonnez-moi mon ignorance

Pardonnez-moi de ne plus connaître l'ancien jeu des vers"(2)

- which, because they ask for pardon, are an indication of the poet's intention to experiment with form. He is asking for the reader's indulgence in the same way as he does much later in "La Jolie Rousse" :

"Vous dont la bouche est faite à l'image de celle de Dieu

Bouche qui est l'ordre même

Soyez indulgents quand vous nous comparez

A ceux qui furent la perfection de l'ordre

Nous qui quêtions partout l'aventure" (3)

(1) For an analysis of these poems see Ch.2 sec.4

(2) O.P., p. 132

(3) O.P., p. 313

But this (Les Fiançailles) is not the first time that Apollinaire wrote in free verse ; therefore why should he choose to make his plea for indulgence in this poem? Undoubtedly it is because he was experimenting with far more than just the length of line and use of rhyme. In fact "l'ancien jeu des vers" should ~~not~~ be taken to mean the old ideas of poetry in general and not just the rules of metre, etc.

However, there is one difference between the quotations from "Les Fiançailles" and "La Jolie Rousse", and that is that the former is not at all definite as to what the poet is replacing the old poetry with. Admittedly "La Jolie Rousse" simply proclaims the role of adventure and this might well be a variety of things, but the rest of the poem is more specific, as has already been shown and as will be further discussed in a later section. "Les Fiançailles" does, of course, offer something in place of what the poet has discarded, but there is a much greater tentativeness about the whole poem. The line which follows the two quoted above states the poet's position as -

"Je ne sais plus rien et j'aime uniquement"

- and it is from this love that he is drawing his new poetry.

The next section of this poem begins with the lines -

"J'observe le repos du dimanche

Et je loue la paresse

Comment comment réduire

L'infiniment petite science

Que m'imposent mes sens"

- which are a clear statement of the poet's desire to achieve an expression of something more than a simple sensuous experience of the world. He praises laziness because there is no need for him to

move around. The experience which he wishes to express is the experience of the imagination and this he can do seated in his chair, as the following quotation from "Le Brasier" shows :

"Là-haut le théâtre est bâti avec le feu solide

Comme les astres dont se nourrit le vide

Et voici le spectacle

Et pour toujours je suis assis dans un fauteuil" (1)

(And since the theatre is situated entirely within the realm of the imagination the "fauteuil" might as well mean his own armchair at home as his seat in the stalls.)

Furthermore, in the section of "Les Fiançailles" following that quoted above, we find the following statement :

"A la fin les mensonges ne me font plus peur" (2)

If we now draw together these various strands which we have isolated from their context, we can see that Apollinaire's preoccupations at this moment were to find poetic forms capable of expressing the experience of the imagination (which is embodied in these two poems, as will later be shown) and to liberate the imagination from the bonds it is held in by one's purely sensuous experience of the world and by the consideration that art should be an imitation of reality. By the statement that he is not afraid to lie, and by the example which he gives -

"C'est la lune qui cuit comme un oeuf sur le plat"

- Apollinaire intends to demonstrate that he is not concerned with those ideas about art which limit it to a purely representative

(1) O.P., p. 110

(2) O.P., p. 134

function with respect to sensually perceived reality, or intellectually digested emotion. This position is identical with that expressed in the following quotations from "Le Poète Assassiné" :

"Il y avait encore dans l'atelier une chose fatale, ce grand morceau de miroir brisé, retenu au mur par des clous à crochet. C'était une insondable mer morte, verticale et au fond de laquelle une fausse vie animait ce qui n'existe pas. Ainsi, en face de l'Art, il y a son apparence (the mirror is in the studio of Croniamental's friend L'Oiseau du Bénin - generally recognised as Picasso), dont les hommes ne se défient point et qui les abaisse lorsque l'Art les avait élevés." (1)

This aspect of the poet's thought, then, would seem to be one of the central pillars of his theories, running right through from the poem which L.C. Breunig has so astutely seen as Apollinaire's "Demoiselles d'Avignon" (2) with all that that implies about its relation to what follows it, to the last period of his life. It is an aspect upon which he throws further light at this period.

Consider the following quotation from an article on the poetry of Jean Royère published in "La Phalange" of January 1908 :

"Nous n'avons pas besoin de vérités ; la nature et la science en ont assez qui nous portent malheur. La poésie de Jean Royère est aussi fausse que doit l'être une nouvelle création au regard de l'ancienne. Quelle fausseté enchanteresse! Rien qui nous ressemble et tout à notre image." (3)

(1) "Le Poète Assassiné" pp. 47-48

(2) "Apollinaire's 'Les Fiançailles'" : Essays in French Literature, nov. 1966. no3. (University of Western Australia)

(3) O.C., t.3, p. 783

But as we have pointed out in the first section of this chapter, if one wishes to establish a poetic universe which does not depend upon the universe of our ordinary perceptions for its existence, then one has recourse to one of two methods, either one refers to another set of conventions, to a mythology, and this is what Royère does as Apollinaire is well aware -

"Et soeur nue de Narcisse, créature certaine du poète, il ne se doutait pas de votre existence antérieure. Mais, triomphe de la fausseté, de l'erreur, de l'imagination, Dieu et le poète crée à l'envi."

- his creatures are the creatures of myth and legend which he may modify, but whose existence is accepted by the reader because already established by a certain convention. The other method is the method which Apollinaire adopts, that of the lie, which by its nature is a violence, since it is contrary to what we know (the truth). Of course, one may argue that there is a whole case to be made out for the writer as liar, which has nothing to do with what we have chosen to call violence, and this is quite true. However, Apollinaire's lies quite definitely fall into the category of violence as can be seen from the line quoted as an example. By comparing the moon to a fried egg, Apollinaire is replacing the image we have of it by another which is calculated to make us laugh.(1) Just how the image functions, however, is not the subject of this section, but is examined in the appropriate part of chapter two.

This role of creator which Apollinaire thinks is that of the poet, and which we called a God-like role(2), receives just that

(1) cf. Ch.2 sec.4 pp. 131-133

(2) cf. p. 18-19

qualification in the article on Royère, and in August of the same year one finds Apollinaire developing the philosophical consequences, or some of them at least, of this consideration :

"Le poète est analogue à la divinité. Il sait que dans sa création la vérité est indéfectible. Il admire son ouvrage. Il connaît l'erreur qui anime sa créature, fausse au regard de nos visions mais qui présente aux puissances momentanées une vérité éternelle. Aussi l'organisme d'une créature poétique ne contient-il pas moins de perfection que celui d'une de celles qui tombent sous nos sens." (1)

Thus the experience which the poet offers us is just as valid as the experience of the world which is offered to us by our senses and the intellect. The poet's instrument of creation must then be the imagination, for if he is to attempt a creation in his own right, then he must not depend upon his senses - means of contact with the external world(2) - nor on his intellect which organises the information received from those senses. Thus the poet's function is to give an imaginative re-interpretation of the world and the experience of it. He establishes, in doing this, new truths for as the above quotation continues :

"Chaque jour peut-être une volonté toute puissante change l'ordre des choses, contrarie les causes et les effets et anéantit le souvenir et la vérité même de ce qui existait la veille pour

(1) O.C., t.3, p.802

(2) cf. "Liens" O.P.p.167: "J'écris seulement pour vous exalter

O sens ô sens chéris

Ennemis du souvenir

Ennemis du désir" etc.

créer une succession d'événements établissant une nouvelle vérité. Tel est l'ouvrage poétique : la fausseté d'une réalité anéantie. Et le souvenir même a disparu."

One notes the obvious influence of the neo-symbolists in the vocabulary, the Mallarméan concept of the poem as "la fausseté d'une réalité anéantie", but it is not our intention here to discuss the extent of that influence. Suffice it to say that the expression may derive much from the neo-symbolists, but as may be seen from the preceding pages of this section, the concept is Apollinaire's own. In fact, Apollinaire here seems to go beyond the desire to re-interpret the world and appears to be according to the artist the powers to remake it.

However, the important point is that Apollinaire insisted on the autonomy of the work of art from the external world ; it had to exist in its own universe. This is clearly revealed in the following quotation, which is taken from an essay on Georges Braque, written in 1908 and later re-incorporated into "Les Peintres Cubistes" in 1911 :

"Pour le peintre, pour le poète, pour les artistes (c'est ce qui les différencie des autres hommes, et surtout des savants), chaque oeuvre devient un univers nouveau avec ses lois particulières."
(1)

Also quite clear from this quotation is the fact that we are justified in extending statements concerning the role of the artist (i.e. painter) to include the role of the poet, for while Apollinaire was always careful to distinguish between the works of poet and painter, he equated their functions.

(1) "Chroniques d'Art" pp. 60-61

It would have been strange indeed if the poetry of Apollinaire, under the stimulus imparted to it by all the intellectual and artistic activity which surrounded the poet at this time, had remained under the symbolist sphere of influence also. Thus one finds in the poems of 1908 a desire to separate himself from the symbolist aesthetic, and to affirm the need for a new poetry. Clearly certain traces remain, and all critics are unanimous in discerning the lasting importance of Apollinaire's early formation. Thus one finds certain contradictions in "Les Fiançailles" and "Le Brasier", but especially the former, and these will be brought out in the analysis of the poem in chapter two, but their full significance will be remarked on in the conclusions to this study.

The most obvious point at which Apollinaire separates from the symbolist approach to poetry is in his determination, which begins to manifest itself at this time, to find the matter of his poetry in the world about him, among the objects of everyday life. It might appear that there is a fundamental contradiction between this attitude to poetry and that elaborated on the preceding pages, the poetry of lies and falsehood, but this contradiction certainly did not exist for Apollinaire. If a poem such as "Zone" can be said to go out into the streets of Paris and find part of its subject matter there, it may also be said to transform that subject matter, as is readily apparent from any analysis of the poem. (1) Apollinaire himself reconciled the apparently contradictory aspects of his approach and he readily saw the same reconciliation in the works of others, as is illustrated by his comment on "Le Défaut de l'Armure" by Albert Erlande (2) :

(1) cf. Ch.2 sec.6

(2) O.C., t.3, p. 815

"Puisqu'il est poète^{q"}/il se serve donc toujours de ses qualités poétiques, qu'il invente plus souvent, et que la réalité ne soit pas pour lui un modèle, mais tout au plus la matière dont il a besoin pour produire comme un peintre a besoin de couleurs."

This then is Apollinaire's attitude to the role of the artist, and if it should have led him to such errors of taste as preferring the now forgotten M. Albert Erlande to Zola and Maupassant -

"Je ne parle pas de Zola ni de Maupassant.

Puisse-t-on étrangler leur souvenir dans un cul-de-sac. On en a assez de tout ce qui ne marque pas chez son auteur une imagination pleine d'inattendu. On ne sera jamais fatigué de la fiction, mais qu'est-ce que la fiction sans fantaisie?"(I)

- he clearly reveals how he was thinking about the role of the writer and its effects upon his own writing were far more felicitous.

There is one final aspect of this period which must be brought out in order to show how close to the ideas of the period 1916-1918 Apollinaire had already come in 1908, and that is his awareness of the nature and the function of the poetic image. The following quotation comes from "Les Trois Vertus Plastiques" which is ostensibly concerned with painting, but it most certainly applies to poetry and particularly to the poetry of Apollinaire himself :

"En vain les saisons frémissent, les foules se ruent unanimement vers la même mort, la science défait et refait ce qui existe, les mondes s'éloignent à jamais de notre conception, nos images mobiles se répètent et ressuscitent leur inconscience et les couleurs, les odeurs, les bruits nous étonnent puis disparaissent

(I) O.C., t.3, p. 815

de la nature." (1)

Ignoring the poetic prose in which this statement is couched, there are two aspects of it which are of particular interest to us; firstly the insistence on the mobile nature of the image and secondly the effect which these images have upon us before disappearing. It is difficult, of course, to say that by mobility of the image Apollinaire meant precisely this or that quality which we may isolate in his writing, but certainly it is a qualification which fits lines of this sort -

"Un tout petit bouquet flottant à l'aventure

Couvrit l'océan d'une immense floraison" (2)

- as indeed does the demand that the image should astonish us. In fact, what the above passage calls for is the kind of quality which Apollinaire accorded to the works of the enchanters and which he claimed to have recaptured in "Les Collines". (3)

Having now outlined the similarities which exist between the theories, more or less formulated as such, of 1916-1918 and the ideas of 1907-1908, one must go on to ask whether Apollinaire held to these ideas constantly, or whether he allowed his restless mind to lead him elsewhere, possibly under the influence of a Delaunay, or even a Picasso. To answer such a question we must look particularly at the period beginning in 1912 and ending with Apollinaire's involvement with the war. This is a period in which he wrote a great deal of art criticism as well as many poems. It is a period which saw the appearance of "Alcools" and "Les Peintres"

(1) "Chroniques d'Art" p. 56

(2) O.P., p. 106 "L'Emigrant de Landor Road"

(3) O.P., p. 172

gubistes" as well as the editions of "Les Soirées de Paris" under Apollinaire's direction. The year 1913 also saw the publication of his "manifesto" "L'Antitradition Futuriste" and one might well draw many conclusions from his acceptance of the futurists as well as his reservations concerning some of their activities, and the distinction which must be made between his writing of the period and theirs.

It is obvious that the futurists' technique of "mots en liberté" is related to many of the experiments one finds in Apollinaire's poetry, in particular the early calligrammes, as is the opinion of M. Adéma -

" ... Marinetti et les futuristes avaient inauguré les 'mots en liberté'. Son (i.e. Apollinaire) premier essai dans le genre s'inspire de ces tentatives diverses. 'Lettre-Océan, (.....) est pourtant une fantaisie concertée dont la difficulté de lecture concourt à l'effet de surprise qu'il recherche par principe." (1) - but many of Apollinaire's friends, as well as later critics, were aware that the character of Apollinaire's so-called manifesto was more jocular than serious.

"Le futurisme a vécu! C'est M. Guillaume Apollinaire qui lui a porté le coup fatal en signant le manifeste qu'on va lire.... Il fallait trouver ceci : Être plus futuriste que Marinetti ; M. Guillaume Apollinaire y a réussi ... Le futurisme a vécu et cela vaut bien qu'on se réjouisse." (2)

Thus André Salmon commenting upon his friend's "manifesto".

(1) Adéma (68) p. 242

(2) "La Fin du Futurisme" in Gil Blas 3 août 1913 - quoted by M. Adéma, in Adéma (68) p. 228

And one is much tempted to agree with M. Adéma who, after quoting Salmon, goes on to conclude :

"On peut se demander si, en effet, le dessein secret d'Apollinaire n'est pas, en outrant les termes, de démontrer l'inanité du mouvement auquel il reproche d'être une imitation, en littérature comme en peinture, des artistes français modernes." And in poetry who else could the Italians imitate but Apollinaire himself? We might well see, then, the "Antitradition futuriste" as a joke at the expense of the futurists who had picked up the destructive aspects only of Apollinaire's poetry, and thought they could build a new world with them.

If in his article "Nos amis les futuristes"(1) Apollinaire ascribes the origins of the futurists' style to sources other than himself, namely -

"La nouvelle technique des mots en liberté sortie de Rimbaud, de Mallarmé, des symbolistes en général et du style télégraphique en particulier,"

- this is not to say that he did not see himself as preceding the Italians to some extent, but rather that he acknowledged, as they did not, predecessors in this line. The brevity of Apollinaire's comment on one of Marinetti's books of poetry should, for example, indicate how little he thought it worth analysing what Marinetti had to say ; yet Apollinaire does not dismiss the book, but then, he was seldom a destructive critic -

" ... le livre de Marinetti, 'Zang Tumb Tumb', s'impose à l'attention par la nouveauté de la technique. C'est un livre d'expression métallique qui mérite qu'on s'y arrête." (2)

(1) "Soirées de Paris" 15 fév. 1914 - O.C., t.3, p. 883

(2) "Soirées de Paris" 15 avr. 1914 - O.C., t.3, p. 885

Apollinaire, then, clearly felt that the futurists had little to teach him ; and one is obliged to conclude that he felt his own work to be superior to that of the futurists where there are similarities which must have drawn his attention. (In fact, this is more or less the judgement of posterity which has confined the futurists' literary efforts to histories of literature.)

The relationship with Delaunay and Orphism is much more complex, and it can neither be explained simply by the evidence which points to the greater part of Apollinaire's articles on Delaunay's work having been written by Delaunay himself, nor by limiting the possible influence of Delaunay to the poem "Les Fenêtres". When the evidence has been weighed up, one inclines toward the view which S.I. Lockerie expressed in his analysis of "Les Fenêtres" -

"Aussi bien chez Delaunay que chez Picasso, Apollinaire aura donc choisi les éléments correspondant le mieux à l'exigence qui était au centre de son propre oeuvre." (1)

- but the results, which are what interests us in this study, differ only slightly from the kind of poetry that Apollinaire was producing before his encounter with Delaunay (2). The real problem, in evaluating the precise influence of Delaunay on Apollinaire's theories, is that at this stage in his career, as can be observed from the evidence which we have quoted to support our argument concerning the period 1908 onward, Apollinaire had not yet formulated his theories as theories or manifestos concerning his own writing, in the way that he did between 1916 and 1918. Thus while one may point

(1) R.L.M. 1966 no. 5, p. II

(2) cf. Ch.3 sec.I

to certain concepts such as simultanism, which becomes ostensible in Apollinaire's work at this time, one has no genuine record of his ideas on the subject. Thus more is to be learned from a direct analysis of the poems of this period and this will be found in chapter three.

The very fact, however, that Apollinaire was so attracted to Delaunay's painting as to baptise it "Orphisme", that he regarded what Delaunay was doing as a development of Cubism equalling in importance what Picasso was doing -

"De même, il y a dans la peinture moderne de nouvelles tendances ; les plus importantes me semblent être, d'une part le cubisme de Picasso, d'autre part l'orphisme de Delaunay." (1)

- indicates that there was something which exercised a great attraction for Apollinaire in Delaunay's work. But, if we consider that he was prepared to allow Delaunay to dictate to him the substance of several articles and then to correct and revise these articles, we must come to the conclusion that the painterly aspects of this new trend in art were less important to Apollinaire than the fact that Delaunay's paintings seemed to him to embody in plastic form certain of his ideas concerning poetry.

Chief among these ideas is that of simultanism, and if Apollinaire is generous enough to take no credit for the invention of the term -

"Delaunay, qui par son insistance et son talent a fait sien le terme de simultané qu'il a emprunté au vocabulaire des futuristes, mérite qu'on l'appelle désormais ainsi qu'il signe: le Simultané." (2)

(1) O.C., t.4, p. 281

(2) Ibid. p. 353

- this is typical of his honesty in these matters, yet an analysis of his poetry, and indeed of his prose(1), reveals that there are important aspects of simultanism in his writing from very early on in his career. Undoubtedly, the encounter with Delaunay stimulated Apollinaire, and was in part responsible for his drawing together of various strands of thought which culminated in the writing of "Les Fenêtres" and "Lundi Rue Christine", but both these poems also have roots in ideas which Apollinaire recorded in his earliest notebooks(2). Thus, if one finds Apollinaire signing an article in which simultanism is discussed(3), one may undoubtedly ascribe this formulation of the ideas to the influence of Delaunay (not simply because Delaunay is the subject of this article), but where Apollinaire's poetry is concerned, one must beware of seeing the hand of Delaunay everywhere.

Clearly then, Apollinaire's ideas remained essentially the same from the time of composition of "Les Fiançailles" until the outbreak of the war, or rather his involvement in it. As to the ideas he held during the war, it is extremely difficult to testify. One assumes them to be much the same as those which he expressed afterwards, and his poetry certainly points to this, even if, in his letter-poems, there is a good deal of simplification of style. In a letter to Madeleine, Apollinaire gives an indication that he felt the poetry which he had written shortly before the war was

(1) cf. André Fonteyne - "Apollinaire Prosateur"

(2) cf. notes to the edition of "Calligrammes" by Michel Décaudin (ed. Club du Meilleur Livre.) cf. also Ch. 3, sec. 2 on these poems and "Acousmate"

(3) e.g. "Réalité, peinture pure" O.C., t.4, p.276 et seq.

aesthetically something quite different -

"Puis j'aime beaucoup mes vers depuis 'Alcools', il y en a pour un volume au moins, et j'aime beaucoup, beaucoup 'Les Fenêtres' qui a paru à part en tête d'un catalogue du peintre Delaunay. Ils ressortissent à une esthétique toute neuve dont je n'ai plus depuis retrouvé les ressorts, mais dont j'ai avec étonnement retrouvé l'exposé dans une de vos divines lettres." (1)

- different from what he had written before or since. Thus we are faced with a situation which Apollinaire has not clarified for us; that is to say that his ideas, when they are expressed as such, during this period are much the same as those of the preceding years, but his poetry is, in his own estimation, more radically different from anything else he had written.

On this evidence, and on the evidence of the poems of this period themselves, as they are analysed in chapter three, one must concede that if the basis of Apollinaire's thinking had remained the same, then he had definitely begun to push his ideas a little further. The poem "Arbre", for example, displays what one might almost call a logical extension of the discontinuity and disparate imagery of the poems written some months earlier. Logical, that is, in the sense that the poet appears to be asking the question - "If a poem may have images which are apparently unrelated, and still be a poem, then why can one not write almost any series of lines and images (this time without the unity accorded to them by their all being things seen or overheard in a certain street at a certain time) and still have written a poem?" (2)

(1) "Tendre comme le souvenir" (lettre du 30 juillet).

(2) For a full analysisⁱ of this poem see Ch. 3, sec. (B).

One must also consider the statement taken from the letter to Madeleine in the light of what Apollinaire wrote after the war, before deciding that the period of "Les Fenêtres" is uniquely different from all other periods of his career. And one certainly cannot say that in a poem such as "La Victoire" Apollinaire did not rediscover some of the aspects of the former, although there are, to be sure, marked differences. The calligrammes also must be considered with "Les Fenêtres" as poetry which certainly offers obvious differences from the rest of Apollinaire's work, but it is more significant to look at the similarities which they offer. (I)

This consideration of Apollinaire's ideas and theories cannot really be separated from the texts, the poems, themselves ; and so it is best to conclude here what has been a rather summary examination of these ideas (of necessity so since the expression of them is also summary apart from the period 1916-1918) and to pass on to an examination of the poetry.

Finally, before leaving this discussion of the evolution of Apollinaire's ideas, perhaps the quotation which best typifies his attitude during the period 1913/14 is the following :-

"Point d'idéal : mais tout ce qui existe : moi-même, mes sens, mon imagination ; les autres leurs sens, leur imagination ; les choses, leurs aspects, leurs propriétés ; les surprises, les êtres qu'elles engendrent et ce qu'elles modifient " (2)

- which will be shown to be appropriate in the ensuing chapters.

(I) of. appendix to Ch.3

(2) Quoted in Adéma (68) p. 245; Apollinaire's reply to a question

"Quel est votre 'idéal d'art'?" put to him by John Charpentier in "La Vie".



CHAPTER TWO : ALCOOLS

SECTION ONE : INTRODUCTION

In this section we shall attempt to isolate and analyse the elements of violence in the poems published in "Alcools" and in the poems contemporary with this volume, which Apollinaire chose to exclude from it. We shall not be concerned with establishing a precise chronology of these poems, but shall rely on the work already done in this field by such eminent scholars as M. Adéma, M. Décaudin and M. Breunig in their various studies. We shall, in fact, be attempting to trace the evolution of the techniques of violence in these poems, but as we have already seen from previous sections, Apollinaire's evolution was not constant, and was affected by a wide variety of stimuli. We shall therefore analyse the poems in groups which may be said to be roughly contemporary, and in the chronological order of the periods represented by those groups.

We propose, then, to begin this section with an analysis of the elements of violence contained in the poems composed in the main before or during 1903, but excluding "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé". The first and most striking characteristic of the elements of violence in these poems is that their obvious source lies in the poet's character. This is a point which we shall come across again and again in the course of this study and it will emerge that violence in poetry is something that was profoundly natural to Apollinaire and not something artificially introduced into his poetry. As examples from the particular poems which concern us at the moment we may take the sexual imagery of "L'Ermite" and also "Merlin et la vieille femme" :

"Le/

"Le soleil ce jour-là s'étalait comme un ventre
Maternel qui saignait lentement sur le ciel" (1)

"O Seigneur flagellez les nuées du coucher
Qui vous tendent au ciel de si jolis culs roses" (2)

The genesis of these images most probably lies in the sexual preoccupations of the adolescent that Apollinaire was when he wrote these poems ; certainly they fail to attain any kind of transcendence of the vulgarly sexual to become real shock images to the adult, sophisticated reader, although they are both more or less relevant to their contexts, there being especially a certain parallel between the condition of the hermit and the young Apollinaire. Similar types of images are to be found in the erotic poetry which Apollinaire published later in his life and it is interesting to note that when seeking to be scabrous he reverted to a very adolescent form of sexual morbidity (3).

There is no doubt that the images from the two early poems were meant to shock, but there is no doubt either where their roots lie. However, there are elements of violence in the poems of this period which are more interesting to us. Elements which equally have their roots in the character of Apollinaire but which betray more permanent tendencies.

The desire to shock is clearly seen in such images as :

"Le grand soleil païen fait mourir en mourant
Avec les bourgs lointains le Christ indifférent" (4)

(1) "Merlin" O.P., p. 88

(2) "L'Ermite" O.P., p. 100

(3) cf. for example "Julie ou j'ai prêté ma rose"

(4) "Passion" O.P., p. 532

Here it is especially the final adjective which is intended to strike home. True, one may say that the victory of the pagan sun-god over the Christ is also meant to shock, but the real weight of the blasphemy is carried by the description of Christ as indifferent. Already Apollinaire is compressing the shock element into as compact a form as possible, knowing it to be all the more effective for this. One notes also the first traces of what was to be for Apollinaire a fruitful source of shock images - namely blasphemy. (This is as true of his prose as of his poetry - consider "L'Hérésiarque et cie.") (1)

This desire to scandalise is also present in the poem "Le Dôme de Cologne" :

"Ton dernier architecte ô Dôme devint fou
Ça prouve clairement que le bon Dieu se fout
De ceux qui travaillent à sa plus grande gloire" (2)

But this poem also contains an image which is so fantastical, so strange, that it surprises and transports the reader to a completely different world :

"Mais sois moderne et que tes prêtres déifiques
Tendant entre tes tours des fils télégraphiques
Et tu deviendras luth" (3)

In this case the effectiveness of the image stems from the fact that it is not just a simple comparison of the towers and the frame of a lute, the poet transforms the one into the other before our eyes as it were, and thus accords the image the power necessary to

(1) On this point consult "Apollinaire Prosateur" by André Fonteyne.

(2) "Le Dôme de Cologne" O.P., p. 538

(3) Ibid.

its success. Although it retains something of the baroque conceit, it makes us laugh and is much more effective because it seeks neither to convey to the reader some strange correspondence between the two elements, nor is it a decorative image. Rather it is an image which rises out of the context of the description of the cathedral to become important in its own right. By contrast, such power is lacking in the following image, which retains the essential characteristic of a description -

"La source est là comme un oeil clos

Pleurant avec de frais sanglots

La naissance triste de l'eau" (I)

- a description which, moreover, we might classify as baroque.

But in "Le Larron" we find a similar yet significantly different image, still essentially baroque in its conception, but expressed with a brevity and force to be found in the later fantastical imagery of "Alcools" :

"Colonnes de clins d'yeux qui fuyaient aux éclairs" (2)

The reduction of the columns of soldiers to blinks of the eye is striking and conveys the desired impression of the swiftness of the passage of time - yet one has to stop and think about the image, it cannot be said to create its own poetic world (like the lines from "L'Emigrant" quoted in the first section of chapter one) but due to its compression it does have considerably more force than the preceding example.

If Apollinaire was not yet adept at creating the type of image which exists in its own world, he was already quite skilful at

(I) "Elégie du voyageur aux pieds blessés" O.P., p. 337

(2) "Le Larron" O.P., p. 91

adding a destructive element which completely changes the effect of the image on the reader. This he did not without a certain humour which is more than a little anarchistic :

"Tandis qu'au fil du Rhin s'en allaient des bateaux

A vapeur

(I)

Clearly, this reveals a certain pleasure on the poet's part in pricking the romantic balloon ; the line-break neatly divides the sentence so that the first line presents a romantic picture of the Rhine which is destroyed by the transmutation of the boats, which one had pictured as sailing boats, into noisy steam ships. This tells us something about Apollinaire's nature ; his ready laughter and his abrupt nature were things which all his friends commented on, and the following quotation from Marcel Adéma's biography will serve as a ready illustration (the context is the meeting of Apollinaire and Max Jacob) :

" . . . 'Sans cesser son discours vigoureux sur les empereurs romains, dira Max Jacob, et sans me regarder il me tendit sa main courte et forte (on pensait patte de tigre). Brusquement il se leva et nous entraîna dans la nuit avec de grands éclats de rire ; alors commencèrent ces interminables flâneries qui pendant des années furent quotidiennes . . . '" (2)

Another of Apollinaire's friends of the period, and one whose nature would also delight in images such as the one quoted above, was Alfred Jarry. Undoubtedly his meeting with Jarry did much to confirm the presence in Apollinaire's poetry of just that humorous element which Apollinaire urged others not to forget in his

(I) "Rolandseck" O.P., p. 351

(2) Adéma (68) p. 106

manifesto "L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes". Nor was the presence of that humour solely destructive, for if in the above quotation its point is being used to deflate the too ready sentimentality of the Rhineland scene, in the same poem we find this skilfully constructed image :

"Sur la route bordant le fleuve et tachée d'ombre

Fuyaient tremblant de peur

Comme des chevaliers indignes les autos"

While there is obviously present here the same destructive element turned against the picturesque, there is also a comic vision which borders on the surreal. It is an image in which the two contrasting worlds are so integrated that the final result is the creation of a new world altogether. The construction of the sentence which at the very last second transforms the image into this juxtaposition of the old world and the new, forces us to laugh, where a simple comparison would have had no effect at all.

In these early poems this humorous element is the clearest indication we have of the violence of Apollinaire's style. As we have pointed out here and in the introduction, it is not merely destructive humour, although it must be partly this, it is creative as well. Occasionally his humour touches on that inspired absurdity which is to be found in "Les Mamelles de Tirésias" and perhaps even in certain passages of "Les Collines" ; for if we compare this image -

"Un phonographe énamouré pour dix pfennigs

Chanta l'amour à quatre voix de chanteurs morts" (I)

with a verse from "Les Collines" which we shall have occasion to

(I) "Mille Regrets" O.P., p. 531

examine at length in the following chapter -

"Tous sont morts le maître d'hôtel

Leur verse un champagne irréel

Qui mousse comme un escargot

Ou comme un cerveau de poète" (I)

would we not be justified in concluding that it was the same sense of the absurd, the same force of the imagination which informs and vitalises both images, even if the former is undoubtedly more trivial than the latter? The mainspring of both these images is their assault on common sense, their denial of the real, of the universe of cause and effect as we know it. By ascribing to the inanimate object the ability to fall in love, by continuing the action after he has begun with the phrase 'everyone is dead', Apollinaire is placing his poem well outside the scope of our normal apprehensions of reality and therefore denying us the occasion both to foresee what will happen and to let our own imaginations take over the poem. We are forced to accept the whims of the poet's imagination. Obviously the quotation from the poem written in the Rhineland is only the embryo of the later development shown in "Les Collines" but the essential is already there.

This kind of anarchistic use of language has, of course, a ready-made vehicle in the pun, but strangely enough there are very few examples of really creative puns in Apollinaire's early work. Perhaps we can best illustrate our meaning here by comparing two examples. The first shows only a play on words which, while not at all forced or inappropriate to the context, is nevertheless fairly banal and uninspired -

(I) O.P. p.176 & cf. also Ch.3 sec.10, pp. 449 -450

"L'entrelacs de leurs doigts fut leur seul laps d'amour" (I)
 - uninspired, because the pun does not rise above the level of
 decoration ; it does not oppose two meanings ascribable to the one
 sound ; it does not really change for us the meaning of the elements.
 On the contrary, this example -

"La tzigane savait d'avance
 Nos deux vies barrées par les nuits
 Nous lui dîmes adieux et puis
 De ce puits sortit l'Espérance" (2)

- makes use of the coincidence of sound to draw together two
 opposed attitudes ; the banal "and then" which seems to indicate
 that there can be no hope after the gypsy's doom-laden prediction,
 becomes the well from which hope is drawn. But because the pun ties
 the two things together, the reader realises that the hope which
 the poet does find, is a forlorn hope. The pun here says for
 Apollinaire what the paradox of the line from "Le Pont Mirabeau"
 said some years later :

"Et comme l'Espérance est violente" (3)

It does not seem excessive to us to insist on this essentially
 subversive aspect of this use of language, the violence that is
 done to the expectations already forming in the reader's mind by
 the metamorphosis of the word. If therefore the idea of the crea-
 tive pun exists in Apollinaire's early work, this is an example of
 it.

The choice of the poem "La Tzigane" to illustrate the fore-

- (I) "Merlin" O.P., p. 88
- (2) "La Tzigane" O.P., p. 99
- (3) O.P., p. 45

going point serves us very well as a means of underlining one very important aspect of Apollinaire's early poetry in general, namely that it is for the most part in a fairly polished and accomplished style which on the whole owes very little to the concept of violence as we have defined it, and as Apollinaire himself came to consider it. The violence that is present in these poems remains in embryo form ; a line here, a line there, which is calculated to outrage, to shock ; the occasional fantastical image which rises out of its context to attain an existence in its own right ; a beginning of a use of language which distorts normal usage ; all this is but a promise of what is to come. If we consider "La Tzigane" as a whole, the example we have taken from it can be seen to be the only thing in the poem which is relevant to the ideas of violence which we are discussing here, and that the poem is a polished successful work of art of a more or less traditional kind. Thus while we insist on the importance of the elements of violence which we have isolated in the poems of the period under discussion, we do not wish to claim that they are paramount in this period of the poet's style or even as immediate hints of what was to follow as one might say the line of verse extended to bursting point in an early poem such as "La Synagogue" is -

"Le vieux Rhin soulève sa face ruisselante et se détourne

/pour sourire" (I)

- since it foreshadows the prosaic expression of "Zone". (Or perhaps one might also say the construction of the poem "Les Femmes" from snatches of dialogue which may be seen as the ancestor of the "poèmes-conversation" in "Calligrammes".) That is to say

that the elements of violence are undoubtedly present, perhaps not fully developed, perhaps lacking the polish of their later developments, though not always, and in this they are as worthy of our attention as all the other latent elements of Apollinaire's later poetry which have been discerned in his early work.

In concluding this section we think it relevant to point out that all the poems which have been referred to here, with the exception of the three earliest, "Merlin et la vieille femme", "L'Ermite" and "Le Larron", are short poems and are confined to the brief lyrical expression of an experience. As such they present nothing like the challenge to Apollinaire's powers of expression that the "Chanson du Mal-Aimé" must have offered, with its consequent stimulus to the development of the poet's technique. Thus we propose to examine that poem separately, in the next section.

CHAPTER TWO

SECTION TWO : LA CHANSON DU MAL-AIME

If we have chosen to deal separately with "La Chanson" it is, as we have said, because it is a composition which must have presented a considerable technical challenge to Apollinaire and as such it was bound to have a radical effect upon the style of the poet, especially given his age and the stage of his evolution. On the other hand, while it is true that the poem was indeed a catalyst to his evolution, those elements in it which can be recognised as elements of violence will be seen to have evolved comparatively little, although his use of surprise imagery, particularly in conveying the conflict of his feelings, does show a greater awareness of the potential of this aspect of his poetry. But violence here remains a tool of an aesthetic that is basically different from that which informed his later poetry.(I)

The elements of violence, then, which we shall isolate in this poem will not appear to be major aspects of it, although their importance will be readily accepted. Generally speaking, for example, there are the many abrupt changes of tone for which the poet is famous ; the numerous emotional volte-faces which never allow the reader to settle into any one mood, and which prevent the poem from becoming too self-indulgent in its lament for a lost love. These clearly have their origin in the feelings of the poet, but it is especially the manner in which they are expressed that is interesting and original. Scarcely has the reader had time to recognise

(I) cf. "Alcools et le Symbolisme" by S.I. Lockerie in R.L.M.,

one emotion than it is coloured by another or even destroyed by the irony of the following phrase :

"Et moi j'ai le coeur aussi gros

Qu'un cul de dame damascène" (I)

The complexity of the emotions felt by the poet is expressed in the violence of his style which almost never leaves a pure image. Here we must consider the construction of the poem as a whole, for this is not at all a narrative poem, in spite of the many narrative and autobiographical elements contained in it.

"Avec celle que j'ai perdue

L'année dernière en Allemagne"

Anyone knowing the background to the poem might well suppose that this is simply a biographical detail thrown into the poem, because the poem concerns something which really happened to the poet, but surely these lines are just as valid when considered as an expression of the temporal and spatial distance which separates Apollinaire from the woman he loved. One might also point to the existence of a spatial progression in the poem as being its narrative framework ; the progression from London to Paris, which can be equated with the temporal progression from presence to absence of the woman, but their importance is only secondary. The poem as a whole is a sequence of images which merge into one another, contrast with one another and even destroy one another, and as such their function is not narrative but evocative. This being the case, the image acquires a certain autonomous importance, as the universal expression of a sentiment, and it is this character of the image which is interesting to us. (In this respect the images of "La Chanson" may be seen as the fore-

(I) O.P., pp. 46-59 as are all other quotations from this poem.

runners of the images of "Le Voyageur"(I).)

"Malheur dieu pâle aux yeux d'ivoire

Tes prêtres fous t'ont-ils paré

Tes victimes en robes noires

Ont-elles vainement pleuré

Malheur dieu pâle qu'il ne faut pas croire"

The image, but for the irresistible rhythm of the poem, would rise out of its context and imprint itself indelibly on the reader's mind ; as it is, it is powerful, emotive, but it passes like a cinematographic image, to give way to another, the rhythm playing the role of the continuity of the film. The reader experiences a certain conflict as he is struck by the power of this image which seeks to hold his attention, while the rhythm and structure of the poem as a whole lead him onwards to the next verse. In the later poems where Apollinaire used "vers libre" this conflict is avoided, and the images are freer, more powerful because of it.

The narrative thread of the poem, which is clearly recognisable, is continually interrupted. The reader is no more allowed to grasp the guide line of a story than he is allowed the luxury of a pure and sustained mood. We are not yet at the stage of "Les Fiançailles", but clearly the way to this later development is being opened here. In this particular case it is the personification which makes the strength of the image, there is not yet present the element of interior violence which is to be found in the later poems and which, as we shall see, is due to the handling of the language as often as to the nature of the image itself. We refer, of course, to images such as that quoted in the first section of chapter one -

(1) cf. Ch.2, sec.5, pp. 180-195

"Soleil cou coupé"

- which comes from the poem "Zone". It is obvious that in comparison the syntax of the verse from "La Chanson" is straightforward.

One element of violence in the poem which immediately springs to mind is the episode of the Cosaques Zaporogues. Although the structure of the poem introduces this section as the reply of the Christian (?) cossacks to a Muslim sultan who demands that they submit to his overlordship, there can be no doubt that it is intended to express Apollinaire's hate for the woman who has deserted him. The form of this passage, then, is extremely interesting to us, for it is not simply a case of Apollinaire saying "I hate you", but is rather an expression of that hate in terms which do not in any way spare the reader's feelings. The obscenity of this passage may be aimed only indirectly at the "faux amour" (since it is overtly addressed to the cossacks) but the reader, on the other hand, is brought into direct contact with it. He is made to feel the full force of the author's feelings. Its effect is undoubtedly therapeutic. By allowing himself to descend to the lowest level of insult the poet purges himself through this articulation of his hate, and purges the reader also, of the guilt which both he and the reader feel throughout the poem. Thus he allows the expression of his still remaining tenderness and hope that the woman will return -

"Mais en vérité je l'attends

Avec mon coeur avec mon âme

Et sur le pont des reviens-t-en

Si jamais revient cette femme

Je lui dirai Je suis content"

- to be all the fresher and all the more touching. This is the importance of the episode of the Cosaques Zaporogues in the poem.

It is not an element of gratuitous violence ; on the contrary, its violence is a means of expression, as direct as is possible, of the feelings which torment the poet ; the reader is made to feel them. But it is none the less interesting to us for that. It is as clear and deliberate a use of violence as exists in Apollinaire's poetry up to this time. Having said this, it is important to note that this is a case of the violence of the poet's experience being the source of the violence of the imagery.

There is another source of violence in the poem which we have already touched on. We have spoken about abrupt changes of tone, the continual upsetting of the reader's expectations. The subject matter of the imagery has a great role to play in this. We have already seen how the over-sentimental is quickly deflated -

"Le grand Pan l'amour Jésus-Christ
Sont bien morts et les chats miaulent
Dans la cour je pleure à Paris"

- (which procedure we have already seen in the image cited from "Rolandseck" in the preceding section). But the reader's sensibility is also brutalised by the rapid switching from classical to modern to mythical elements in the imagery -

"Nous semblions entre les maisons
Onde ouverte de la mer Rouge
Lui les Hébreux moi Pharaon"

- The effectiveness of this image lies in its strangeness and in its total unexpectedness, its weird juxtaposition of modern London and ancient Egypt. The spectacle of a drunken, scarred lout staggering out of a tavern is followed by the return of Ulysses to Ithaca and to his faithful wife. These disparate elements are assembled, each with its own evocative function, into a unity which

is that of the poem itself. Perhaps those critics who thought that Apollinaire learned the art of collage from Picasso should have looked more closely at "La Chanson" before pronouncing on the matter. The unity and harmony of the whole arises from its power, which welds together the many disparate elements which the poet has assembled.

Thus while this poem may be considered as the forerunner of poems like "Le Voyageur" and "Les Fiançailles", it is also in one way the opposite of what Apollinaire was trying to do in these later poems, for as we shall see (I), the lack of cohesion among the various elements which compose those two poems has a very definite function to fulfil in them - namely to modify through the liberty and autonomy of the image the nature of the poem itself, the nature of the poetic experience. In "La Chanson" the poet does not seek the total independence of the image, but rather, by bringing together the apparently unconnected images and then linking them by means of the rhythmical and musical structure of the verses, he seeks to express the paradoxical nature, the turbulence of his feelings. Thus verses like the following -

"L'amour est mort j'en suis tremblant

J'adore de belles idoles

Les souvenirs lui ressemblant

Comme la femme de Mausole

Je reste fidèle et dolent"

are rich in levels of contradictory feelings, as are the two juxtaposed verses below :

"Je ne veux jamais l'oublier

(I) cf. Ch.2, sec.5 and also Ch.2, sec.4

Ma colombe ma blanche rade
 O marguerite exfoliée
 Mon fle au loin ma Désirade
 Ma rose mon girofler
 Les satyres et les pyraustes
 Les égyptans les feux follets
 Et les destins damnés ou faustes
 La corde au cou comme à Calais
 Sur ma douleur quel holocauste"

In other words, the use of what we have called techniques of violence is subordinated to the traditional lyrical needs of expression instead of becoming an instrument in the creation of a new lyricism, as they were later to be for Apollinaire.

Nevertheless the beginnings of these important aspects of the poet's later style are clearly present in this poem, just as the construction of the poem from separate passages foreshadows the construction of "Les Fiançailles", these passages having a relationship to one another which adds to the significance of the whole (I) ; e.g. the independent "Aubade" being the celebration of the love announced at the end of the preceding section as well as constituting the elegy that the following section destroys.

Finally we may close this section by pointing out that the images of real physical violence and suffering do not at all act in the same way upon the sensibility of the reader as do the violent transitions from one image to another, where the author has attempted to make the reader feel the paradoxical nature of what he is saying. For example, the translation of emotional suffering into physical

(I) cf. Ch.2, secs.4 & 5

suffering that is present in the following passage -

"Pour chauffer un coeur plus glacé

Que les quarante de Sébaste

Moins que ma vie martyrisés"

- is effective in all the ways that the poet intends, but it does not shock or wound the reader. Nor could one say that this was the case with the verse which precedes the "Sept Epées" :

"Sept épées de mélancolie

Sans morfil 8 claires douleurs

Sent dans mon coeur"

If one speaks of violence with regard to "La Chanson", then one may say that these images contribute to the general atmosphere, but are much less violent for the reader than such passages as "Réponse des Cosaques Zaporogues". It is nonetheless proper to speak of violence in this poem, for as we have shown the poet employs various techniques which clearly belong in this category - and no less interesting to us is the fact that an enterprise of this magnitude should have led him to employ almost all the aspects of violence that we have seen in the several poems already examined.

CHAPTER TWO : SECTION THREE

PICASSO AND MAX JACOB

"De la rencontre de ces trois hommes, de leur contact et de leur amitié va jaillir une esthétique nouvelle, un "Esprit Nouveau". Elle va ouvrir le second cycle apollinarien."(1)

Thus Marcel Adéma describes the meeting of Apollinaire and Picasso and the meeting between Apollinaire and Max Jacob. These meetings which took place towards the end of 1904 were indeed to change the life and the thought of Apollinaire and were to have a profound and lasting effect on his poetry. In no way, however, should one assume, as did Georges Duhamel in the case of Jacob(2) and as others have done in the case of Picasso, that Apollinaire was merely an imitator of what was new and exciting in the ideas and works of the two others. We have shown how even in his earliest poems there are the beginnings of a style which consciously and on an important scale exploits the concept of violence as a literary device and we intend to show that from this time onwards this aspect of the poet's style takes on more and more importance and that its exploitation becomes more and more ambitious in its goals. Clearly the meeting of these three men was the meeting of three minds whose ideas had much in common and who were all encouraged to

(1) Adéma p. 75

(2) "Qui mieux est, je reconnais dans les accents du poète d'Alcools des inflexions de voix plus prochaines : celle par exemple de Max Jacob dont Apollinaire admire à coup sûr l'invention et la science psychologique . . ." Criticism published in Mercure de France, 16th June 1913.

pursue the further and more daring development of these ideas as a result of this meeting.

Certainly immediate traces of the influence of both Picasso and Jacob are to be found in Apollinaire's poetry, but there are obvious reservations to be made about the importance of these more concrete influences. In this section we propose to examine the poems "Palais" and "L'Emigrant de Landor Road" and to show from this examination that the success of the latter, which was in all probability written before the meeting (1) with Picasso and Jacob, is much greater than that of the former even though the former is intended as an exorcism of the kind of poetry that Apollinaire was writing under the influence of his feelings for Annie, of which group the latter was part. That this was the case and that this is an important factor in our consideration of the poetry of Apollinaire, is due to the fact that "Palais" suffers too much from the undigested influence of Max Jacob. This can therefore be offered as a further proof of Apollinaire's originality in this field.

"Palais" is dedicated to Jacob and in its tone of burlesque, of pastiche, it is very much akin to his poetry and foreign to that of Apollinaire. In the whole of "Alcools" there is really only the poem "Clair de Lune"(2), apart from "Palais", which seeks to be a direct burlesque of another mode of poetry. Furthermore, "Palais" is an unfinished and imperfectly worked out piece, as M. Décaudin shows :

"Nous en connaissons au moins quatre états : les trois versions

(1) Déc. p. 170

(2) O.P., p. 137 e.g. "Les astres assez bien figurent les abeilles"

- the symbolism of scene is not taken at all seriously.

publiés et un brouillon, très raturé, écrit sur des feuilles arrachées à un registre ; il est inachevé ; le poète semble à bout de souffle et n'a pas encore trouvé la résolution des jeux d'images auxquels il s'est abandonné. On le voit chercher l'inattendu : juxtaposition de plusieurs registres d'images, allusion grossièretés de vocabulaires . . ."(1)

and it is perhaps not too much to conjecture that the poem was proving so difficult to write because it was not only a form of renunciation of his past but because its form and expression were too foreign to the poet.

If Madame Durry could say :

"Un début dégradé, défait, nié par la fin, les pensées et le rêve changés en aliments corrompus et bâfrés, l'allégorie narguée par l'allégorie, la correspondance par la correspondance, tout me prouve que le poème met en accusation l'Ecole symboliste."(2)

- we may also say that the poem is an attempt at exorcising the poet's own past, for how much of his early poetry, major pieces as well as minor, is written in the symbolist style! (3)

But let us examine the poem in more detail, and in particular the elements of violence which we may find in it. In the first place the poem falls into two distinct parts which contrast very strongly ; the first being bathed in the atmosphere of the symbolist allegory (personified thoughts seeking their goal in a mysterious palace)

(1) cf. Déc. p. 110

(2) cf. Durry vol. 2, p.46

(3) cf. S.I. Lockerbie "Alcools et le symbolisme" R.L.M., Nos. 85-89, 1963.

even though containing various hints that it should not be taken entirely seriously, the second very much farcical in tone, revealing that the palace contains nothing but trivialities, and containing an extremely grotesque banquet scene. As Madame Durré says : "... le vrai choc a été donné au moment où, du premier mouvement du poème, on a passé au second, qui nie le premier." (1) But as we have said, the first part of the poem contains hints that it should not be taken too seriously : the poet's thoughts go bare-foot, the background music is the croaking of frogs etc., and so the effect of shock is attenuated because some distance has been established already between the reader and the poem. The reader is not too involved in the poem precisely because these elements of burlesque are already present in the first half. And so, if Madame Durré can say of the second part :

"La critique du poème s'est introduite dans le poème et avec elle tout a commencé à pourrir sur place." (2)

We place certain reservations upon our agreement for the reasons given above. This element of interpenetration in the poem weakens the effects of shock and is noticeably absent from "La Chanson" which contains just as many conflicting and mutually hostile elements as "Palais". But in "La Chanson" the irony the poet feels is made to act retrospectively on his self-pity which is allowed its own pure expression first :

"Beaucoup de ces dieux ont péri

C'est sur eux que pleurent les saules

Le grand Pan l'amour Jésus-Christ

(1) cf. Durré, vol.2 p. 42

(2) ibid.

Sont bien morts et les chats miaulent" (I)

On the other hand the all-pervasiveness of the light-hearted and mocking tone is precisely a common feature of the poetry of Max Jacob, it is a sort of self-defensive irony.(2) No doubt in seeking to separate himself from a part of his past Apollinaire had need of an ironic shell.

But the poem does have this very serious level which we have indicated - this element of separation from the past. In the last stanza of the poem :

"Ah! nom de Dieu! qu'ont crié ces entrecôtes

Ces grands pâtés ces os à moelle et mirétons

Langues de feu où sont-elles mes pentecôtes

Pour mes pensées de tous pays de tous les temps"(3)

- the poet is clearly renouncing the ability, or the claim to the ability, to communicate to all men on things spiritual. He is abandoning the symbolist conception of poetry and is prepared to put everything into the melting-pot. Even so, within the poem is the same thread of shock tactics which may be discerned in the earlier poems and which he was to develop in his later ones. For if the major shock element of the poem, the contrast between the two parts, is not entirely successful, there are nonetheless the various irreverences (Des rôtis de pensées mortes dans mon cerveau"/ the rhyme "entrecôte"- "pentecôte", "Dame de mes pensées au cul de perle fine" etc.) which are there to surprise the reader. Thus while the poem is in some respects a dead end, there are still these elements of

(I) La Chanson du Mal-Aimé, p. 50

(2) cf. "Le Cheval" quoted Durrty op.cit. 2. p.28

(3) Palais, O.P., p.62

the later style to remind us of the direction his poetry was to take.

In contrast, "L'Emigrant de Landor Road", although it is an earlier poem and one which forms part of the Annie cycle, shows that the poet was developing the element of violence in his style under his own impetus. In the very first stanza of the poem we find an image which is unique in the poetry of Apollinaire up to this date :

"Ce commerçant venait de couper quelques têtes

De mannequins vêtus comme il faut qu'on se vête" (I)

and also an image which separates very nicely for us the strands of physical and literary violence, for although the image of decapitation creates the mood of cruelty by one person to another, the fact that the image is introduced humorously and that the mannequin victims are not real people, means that we do not react to the image as we would to the experience (even second hand) of real physical violence ; nonetheless the image is an image of violence for it is totally unexpected and so strange that the reader is displaced, as it were, by the image, from his own world into that, unreal, of the poem. Certain critics, among them M. Décaudin, have said of this poem that Apollinaire is here masking his bitterness with humour, that he is hiding his real feelings as he hides the real significance of the poem in the title. This is undoubtedly so, but his real feelings are present in the poem, and can be guessed at by the reader even should he be ignorant of the significance of the title. (Landor Road was where Annie Playden's parents had their home, and where Apollinaire had called on her in London before she

(I) "L'Emigrant de Landor Road" O.P., p. 105

left for America.) Undoubtedly also this fusion of surface humour and underlying grief and bitterness is brought about through this initial image. This is the real power of the image, that it can express real suffering in an apparently humorous way, and its ability to do this depends on its unexpectedness, its violence being brought to bear on the sensibility of the reader. If the whimsy and humour are already apparent in the first line of the poem :

"Le chapeau à la main, il entra, du pied droit"

- they in no

way prepare the reader for the strangeness of the third which is all the more violent for ending on the word "têtes", so that fleetingly one has the impression of real violence before this is modulated by the carry-over into the next line and "De mannequins...". But we are not allowed to feel that real murders have taken place, for this would be really alien to the poem's atmosphere ; therefore our reaction is to the fantastic quality of the image, to its strangeness. The poet has somehow tricked us into crossing the threshold with the comic figure he introduces in the first line, and we find ourselves in a disquieting world where :

"Et des mains vers le ciel plein de lacs de lumière

S'envolaient quelquefois comme des oiseaux blancs"

If this image has a certain logic of its own : the white of a hand that is waving becoming the white of a bird flying away : it is no less disquieting to the reader, not so much because it too is an image of the disintegration of the human body, but because it is removed from the normal world of cause and effect that we are accustomed to. It supports the previous image in giving a feeling of "dépaysement" (I). And in this strange new world the bitterness

(I)The term is André Fonteyne's, cf. "Apollinaire Prosateur" passim.

that lies behind the humour is apparent. The disintegration of the normal world is reflected in the beheading of the mannequins, in the hands leaving the arms that are waving them - one is tempted to describe both these images as black humour, but whatever one calls them, it cannot be denied that they are a successful blend of pain and humour.

The sixth stanza of the poem expresses quite overtly the pain which is only partly concealed in the images discussed above. Apart from the purely visual aspect which is lent by the difference in verse form and which serves to underline the stanza, as it were, the end words of the last two lines - *victimes*, *enchaînées* - make the entire stanza more painful than humorous. Although again it is the strangeness of the image which makes it effective - the vision of the emigrant's past as a line of chained convicts looking at the beheaded dummies in the window of the tailor's shop, belongs to the fantasy world of the poem and might well seem absurd to the reader were it not for the way in which the poet has already drawn us into that world. Nevertheless this image carries its own elements of surprise and suddenness to force it past the reader's sense of the ridiculous and to turn any laughter on his part into a "rire jaune"; this task is performed mainly by the rhythm of the stanza which joins "Au dehors" to "les années", thus personifying the latter, before the reader has the chance to object; and the rhythm also in being more heavily accented in its phrasing, more staccato than the rest of the poem, carries the suggestion of the movement of a file of men chained together. In some ways this image also serves as an introduction to the next stanza, the personified years becoming personified days.

This stanza leaves behind even the element of reality that

was present in the scene in the tailor's shop, but here again we are confronted with a mixture of pain and humour and suggestions of unfaithfulness in love. Here the strangeness of the "journées veuves", the rather exaggerated sadness of the "vendredis sanglants" and the humour of the last line, which sounds like some old country saying to explain bad weather, switch rapidly and in an almost arbitrary fashion the sensations communicated to the reader, and in so doing reveal the reality of the pain that lies behind the mask of humour, because each is shown to be some kind of mask as it is succeeded by the next - the poet therefore implies what is behind, and this must be pain and unhappiness as this is the only common element of the imagery. But again we must insist that the ability to fuse these two apparently contradictory elements so that the reader is aware of them both, and the relationship which governs them, is due to the surprise element which springs the images upon the reader, and creates continuously the interior logic of the poem's own world where this fusion is a truth.

It is also worth remarking at this point that the entire stanza with only one minor modification ("C'étaient" replaces "viendront") is taken from a poem which Apollinaire had composed some years previously - "Adieux" (I). Again we see, as we saw with the "Aubade" in the "Chanson", that Apollinaire was quite willing to use early poems as sources of material for others. This technique, for it is a technique, was to be developed to play a very important role as in "Les Fiançailles" where as we shall see, the extracts taken from the earlier poems have a dual function to fulfil; that is that they must not only be a part of the poem "Les Fiançailles"

in their own right, but must also stand as examples of the kind of poetry which Apollinaire is saying he has abandoned, for "Les Fiançailles" does more effectively what the poet attempts to do in "Palais". In the context of "L'Emigrant", however, the extract from the earlier poem is completely integrated so that the reader is not aware that it is taken from elsewhere. This is also true of the last stanza which is taken from the poem "Printemps"(1) which provided much of the material which Apollinaire used in "Les Fiançailles". However, at this stage it remains a technique which is invisible to the reader - one might call it a stop-gap.

In the tenth stanza there is an image which functions, as it were, at the wave of a magic wand :

"Un tout petit bouquet flottant à l'aventure
Couvrit l'Océan d'une immense floraison"

- it is a sudden transformation of the scene which is described to us in rather over-sentimental terms, and its effect is rather like that of a conjuror producing a rabbit from a top hat. We are surprised and delighted by it. It is a metamorphosis wrought by the enchanter, a role that Apollinaire never ceased to claim was his and one which was to be fundamental to his idea of "surnaturalisme" and "surréalisme" as when in a poem such as "Océan de Terre"(2) he changes one object into another :

"J'ai bâti une maison au milieu de l'Océan
Ses fenêtres sont les fleuves qui s'écoulent de mes yeux"(3)
These then are the images of violence in "L'Emigrant", they

(1) O.P., p. 556

(2) O.P., p. 268

(3) cf. Ch.3, sec.8, pp. 355 - 359

are indispensable to the success of the poem, they create the atmosphere which is essential if the poem is to communicate to the reader the poet's real feelings. It seems to us quite fair to say that this poem is far more successful than "Palais" and that this is because "L'Emigrant" sprang directly from Apollinaire's own experience whereas "Palais" is a pastiche, and also a poem which sets out to discuss aesthetics. We do not think it unjustified to see in this the hand of Max Jacob, chief among those who turned against Apollinaire the cry which he and others had used to disrupt the "Soirées de la Plume" "Toujours trop symboliste!". A third poem written about this time, "Salomé"(I), may help to throw a little light on both these poems. In his book "Le Dossier d'Alcools", M. Décaudin has said of "Salomé" :

"Cruauté inconsciente et un peu folle, se résolvant dans une ritournelle comique, monde de fantaisie ; comme dans 'L'Emigrant de Landor Road', le jeu et l'ironie sont un masque à la douleur."(2)
 - indeed it is, but it is also a burlesque of a favourite symbolist theme, and while it is true that Apollinaire had never been a member of any symbolist group the fact that he wrote this poem as a mockery of their ideas seems to lend support to our hypothesis that he was subject to external pressures which made him want to dissociate himself from symbolism and its adherents.

And so we see Apollinaire question his own talents in "Palais", for in that last stanza he is not only rejecting the symbolist concept of poetry but also his own poetic abilities. He is about to enter a period of crisis during which he will publish nothing for a

(I) O.P., p. 86

(2) Déc., p. 140

whole year. And so the tone of "Palais" is the tone of another man :

"La dédicace à Max Jacob éclaire l'inspiration de ce poème publié pour la première fois en novembre 1905 dans la Revue Littéraire de Paris et de Champagne. Apollinaire s'essaie à la fantaisie dont son nouvel ami lui donne, dans les histoires qu'il raconte, des exemples d'une liberté déconcertante."(I)

And "Palais" is the poorer poem for it. It is in many ways a retrograde step from the position reached by Apollinaire in "L'Emigrant", but it did not, as we shall see, send him off on the wrong path for good.

Perhaps the principal difference which one may point to between these two poems, "Palais" and "L'Emigrant de Landor Road", is that the former appears as a poem which has had its shock effects grafted on to it, in order to ridicule its theme, whereas the latter is completely unified ; its shock effects are an integral part of the poem, necessary to the expression of the poet's feelings.

(I) Déc., pp. 109-110

CHAPTER TWO : SECTION FOUR

1907 - 1908

In this section we shall be concerned with the poems which Apollinaire wrote in 1907 and 1908, poems more ambitious by far than any he had attempted up to this point in his career and which mark the end of the period of crisis which he had undergone since the unhappy end to his affair with Annie. During the time in which these poems were written Apollinaire met Marie Laurencin and became more and more interested in the activities of those painters who were included in the group of his friends and acquaintances. It was a period of intense stimulation for him, both intellectually and sentimentally and although he had already produced the majority of the poems which were eventually to make up "Alcools", most of the poems which he wrote at this time and indeed up to the publication of "Alcools", are among the most interesting in that book, whether by virtue of their ambitious nature ("Les Fiançailles") or by the simple perfection of their lyrical expression ("Le Pont Mirabeau"). However, the poems which shall concern us principally in this section are "Lul de Faltenin", "Le Brasier", "Onirocritique" and "Les Fiançailles".

These poems represent by far the most significant development to date in Apollinaire's use of violence ; the perfection of his technique of juxtaposing apparently unrelated fragments is achieved in these poems and the importance of "Onirocritique" as one of the sources of surrealism, both Apollinaire's and that of the surrealists, is universally accepted. If at the same time Apollinaire was tempted by the ideas of the neo-symbolists under Jean Royère, and these have left their marks upon his poetry, his own profound originality as

well as his dislike of schools made sure that his poetry remained his own just as much during this period as later in his career. We shall also explore in this section the influence of Picasso and the cubists on Apollinaire's poetry and shall show that while there are indeed certain important similarities between the two, Apollinaire was not merely trying to translate the plastic experiments of the cubists into literary terms and indeed that the term cubist when applied to the poetry of Apollinaire is meaningless. We have already seen in the section dealing with "La Chanson" that Apollinaire was using what some critics have called the technique of collage some time before he even met Picasso, and the development of collage as a pictorial technique did not come about for some time after that.

We begin by looking at the poem "Lul de Faltenin", which Apollinaire probably wrote in November of 1907, and which in any case he published at that time. One immediate aspect which is shared by all the poems we shall deal with in this section is apparent on reading this poem, and that is its obscurity. There are a variety of reasons for this obscurity but chief among them is Apollinaire's desire to fuse as many levels of meaning as possible into his images and statements. Often an examination of the manuscripts of these poems reveals that Apollinaire rejected the first image he had created for something more obscure, more capable of carrying several levels of meaning :

"On remarque aussi qu'Apollinaire, à mesure qu'il rédige son oeuvre, va parfois du réel à l'irréel, de l'image naturelle à l'image plus métaphorique et éloignée de son point de départ. A la description évidente des deux vers :

"Si les bateliers ont ramé

Loin des récifs à fleur de l'onde"

il a préféré le tableau plus mystérieux :

"Si les bateliers ont ramé

Loin des lèvres à fleur de l'onde" (1)

One also realises that the poet is constantly moving away from the real world into a world of his own ; but in this poem one misses the force that was present in the images of "L'Emigrant". There is a violence present in this poem, but it is much less effective in as much as it is merely the description of physical violence, or its results, perpetrated on the narrator of the poem :

"Le sang jaillit de mes otelles

A mon aspect et je l'avoue

Le meurtre de mon double orgueil" (2)

The various analyses of this poem (3) have shown all that Apollinaire is compressing into the character of the narrator, and have separated the sexual and spiritual levels of meaning that he was fusing together here. It is not our intention here to repeat the work that others have done in this field, and so we shall content ourselves with pointing out that what the poem has gained in complexity from this fusion it has lost in immediacy. In general what makes this poem different from "L'Emigrant" and the other poems which we shall discuss in this section is a unity of tone. It is true that the poem does contain elements of the unexpected

(1) L.C. Breunig, "Le Manuscrit de Lul de Faltenin", Revue des Sciences Humaines, Oct.-Dec. 1956, p. 403

(2) Lul de Faltenin, O.P., p. 97

(3) Breunig, op. cit. and also "Le Flaneur des Deux Rives", juin 1955, the articles of Scott Bates and of René Louis.

("Loin des lèvres à fleur de l'onde"); images that are unreal (" . . .et le firmament s'est changé très vite en méduse"), but there is almost no variation of tone throughout the entire poem. Everything is bathed in an atmosphere of symbolic unreality which detracts from the potential of individual images.

In fact we know that this poem was first published in "La Phalange" in November of 1907, and this review was founded by Jean Royère to be the organ of the neo-symbolist movement which he had begun. We also know that Apollinaire greatly admired Royère and became greatly interested in certain of the latter's aesthetic ideas(I), in particular his ideas concerning falsehood and truth in poetry. But no group could long detain Apollinaire and only "Lul de Faltenin" and "Pipe"(2) among his poems remain to show their influence.

"Le néo-symbolisme du groupe de la Phalange le séduit mais il a trop d'originalité pour suivre longtemps un lyrisme engagé. Il cessera sa collaboration en 1909 mais la fréquentation de ce milieu de jeunes poètes l'aidera à dégager sa propre inspiration. ."(3)

We propose to pass on now to an examination of "Le Brasier" and also of "Les Fiançailles" treating these two poems together as they both grew from the same first rough draft entitled "Pyrée"(4). These poems represent the real development of Apollinaire's use of

(I) See Ch.I, sec.2

(2) O.P., p. 572

(3) cf. Adéma (68), p. 121

(4) cf. Déc., p. 176 and also Breunig "Apollinaire's "Les Fiançailles"
Essays in French Literature (University of W. Australia) no. 3
Nov. 1966, p. 7

violence as a literary technique and we propose to study them in detail. It is first necessary to remind the reader that at this time Apollinaire's writings on art and his interest in the plastic arts in general increased greatly with certain consequences for his poetry, as we shall see.

"Le Brasier" begins with the poet's renunciation of his past. It is ritualised, described as though it were a ceremony, but the metaphorical nature of the fire, its complexity, is made clear from the start.(I)

". le noble feu

Que je transporte et que j'adore"

This is not only because the description is metaphoric but also so that the element of cruelty that is present, especially in "De vives mains" may also be ritualised. There is nothing to shock us in the first two lines, so that the pun on "feu" which is strategically placed at the end of the third line, comes as even more of a surprise to us. It introduces a slight note of flippancy, a wry humour. The next line brings together "Ce Passé" and "Ces têtes de morts" without any intermediary so that we are forced to see the past, and perhaps not only the author's, as dead and completely sterile. The past that is being destroyed is not only the poet's own immediate past but also the history of our civilisation, which is dismissed as just another skull.

The second stanza begins on a note of irreverence which catches us unawares :

"Le galop soudain des étoiles"

The ancient theme of the cosmic dance is expressed with a humour

which does not deny its validity, but which nevertheless serves to distance the reader from the remains of symbolist or neo-symbolist expression and imagery in the poem. And if the centaurs are chosen to represent the animal world here, there is no doubt a humorous element in their presence, as there is in the idea of ". . . des grands¹ plaintes végétales". This distance that is created between the reader and the terms of the poem, or this part of the poem, is not gratuitous. It serves as an indication that the means of expression that the poet is using is part of the past that he is throwing in the fire. This is emphasised by the change of verse form in part two of the poem. The poet is approaching the "autrefois/J'ai fait des poèmes selon des règles que j'ai oubliées" which is present in the manuscript "Les Paroles Etoiles"(1) and which was probably the very first draft of the ideas which were eventually to make up "Le Brasier" and also "Les Fiançailles"(2). In this respect it is worth noting that this first part of "Le Brasier" was almost certainly composed after the other parts as can be seen from the manuscripts. Hence its regular versification can be seen as a deliberate attempt on the part of the poet to express himself in a way from which he felt he had progressed. This is not just a simple distinction between "vers libres" and regular verse for clearly Apollinaire had used "vers libres" long before the composition of this poem. It is worth our observing here that the verse form that Apollinaire chose for this section of the poem is the verse form of "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé", the form in which he had achieved such heights of lyrical expression. Now the very fact that this section of the poem was

(1) cf. Déc. p. 204

(2) cf. Déc. pp. 173-177 and pp. 201-208; also Durrty t.3 pp. 162-168.

composed after the other two sections leads us to think that the poet intended the change from regular to free verse should be seen as significant.

It seems to us that there is a parallel to be drawn here between Apollinaire's use of language in a way that betrays his awareness that he is using it as a tool and his heightened awareness of the role of the artist as a creator who chooses to work in a certain medium, which arose from his increasing activities as an art critic.

"Pour le peintre, pour le poète, pour les artistes (c'est ce qui les différencie des autres hommes, et surtout des savants), chaque oeuvre devient un univers nouveau avec ses lois particulières." (1) And this was a conception of the approach to a work of art or literature that Apollinaire held constantly during this period of great change in his poetry, for he wrote and published it in 1908 and again in his book "Les Peintres cubistes" in 1911.

"Matisse est un des rares artistes qui se soient complètement dégagés de l'impressionisme. Il s'efforce non pas d'imiter la nature mais d'exprimer ce qu'il voit et ce qu'il sent par la matière même du tableau, ainsi qu'un poète se sert des mots du dictionnaire pour exprimer la même nature et les mêmes sentiments." (2)

This awareness is definitely meant to be awakened in the reader also, and it becomes increasingly clear when one examines "Les Fiançailles", where the same effect is achieved by slightly different means.

(1) Chroniques d'Art 1902-1918 (Ed. Breunig) pp. 60-61 (article on Braque)

(2) Chroniques d'Art 1902-1918 (Ed. Breunig) p.74 (article on Matisse)

Returning to the text, in stanza four the poet springs upon the reader a series of images destined to create an unreal; or perhaps surreal, world ; flames grow like flowers, hearts hang from lemon trees and the stars which have bled are assimilated to the bodiless heads of women. The tone of this stanza is very different from the tone of the three preceding stanzas. Where the first three stanzas deal in metaphor which while different from our normal conception of the world can co-exist with it, the fourth stanza is a systematic destruction of reality as we know it, and quite definitely supersedes this reality by the force of the images. In the first line the order of the words allows the reader's imagination to form a picture of flowers growing on a plain before replacing the flowers by flames ; by delaying the key word in the image to the end Apollinaire first calls to mind a picture of the reality which he wishes to destroy. This procedure is not repeated in the second line, but whereas it was necessary to reinforce the metamorphosis of flower to flame, this is not so of the Bosch-like quality of the image that is presented to us here. There is a certain echo of "Palais" in the third line ("Pendez vos têtes aux patères"), in this image which we cannot feel as cruel but which nevertheless violates all our concepts of reality. What is here being cast into the fire are the past loves of the poet, which have remained as his inspiration even after the physical absence of the women whom he wooed ; hence perhaps the fact that the heads are present while the bodies are not, although the image of the bodiless head and its identification with some stellar body recurs again and again in Apollinaire's poetry with many different functions.

The final stanza has a magic quality which is an admirable climax to the section. Its mystery cannot be entirely penetrated,

but it seems to operate an identification between the poet's former self (the shift of the pronoun from "je" to "tu" is what separates past from present here) and the world as seen from the solar heights to which the poet, his present self that is, has now ascended in his identification with the fire which is consuming his past and which is at the same time the sun under which the poet's soul is exposed naked :

"Mon âme au soleil se dévêt"

Perhaps in the last two lines of the stanza the poet is seeing his former self illuminated by the rays of his sun-self from different angles in the way that the sun's rays striking rocks from different angles can seem to make them move. In any case the imagery in this stanza depends for its efficacy and for its mystery on the unreality, the other-worldly quality which stems from the poet's discovery that by the use of language he may create a river which is 'pinned' to a town. To the reader there is no association between the words "fleuve" and "épingle" but the poet has used the grammatical possibility of their association to create his image, (the force of "épingle" is reinforced by the use of "fixe" in the following line which continues the image). The maintained existence of the world, surreal or unreal, of the poem depends upon this continuation of the violation of the reader's concepts of reality. It is a question of energy, if we may be permitted the analogy ; the poet's language must destroy the real world at the same time as he creates the unreal one, and he is thus committed to a process of continuous creation, a dialectic concept of the poet's role.

On this subject, Breunig has much to say of interest :

"Apollinaire's biographers have amply described his spiritual crisis of 1907-1908. Suffice it to say here that he was attempting like

Picasso and Braque to evolve a new means of expression best summed up by the term "simultaneity", a word which did not gain common currency until around 1912. His dedication of "Les Fiançailles" to Picasso suggests that he was actually trying to adapt Cubist techniques to poetry. Efforts to substantiate this hypothesis have proved quite futile, but there is no doubt about the similarity of the goals. Apollinaire, like the two founders of Cubism, was, in the broadest sense, groping to reconcile multiplicity and unity in such a way that both would remain. It is fascinating to observe in his prose writings of 1908 a tendency to think more and more in dialectical terms, constantly fusing antithetical concepts in neat paradoxes which would allow a quality to become its opposite without losing its identity : truth in the lie, clarity in obscurity, humanity within inhumanity, restraint within audacity, etc.

"This mode of thought harmonized perfectly with Apollinaire's own character. His greatest fault was his inability to make up his mind, but from youth this indecisiveness, far from leading to apathy, produced an ebullient thirst for ubiquity. Why couldn't he be in all places at one time or in all times at one place? It was not until 1908, however, that he seems to have had the revelation that as a poet he did not have to choose, that, instead, he could fuse. And "Les Fiançailles", I believe, is the dramatic expression of that revelation." (1)

If we have quoted at some length from L.C. Breunig's article on "Les Fiançailles" it is because we have several points to make in relation to it, and because as we have already pointed out it is not possible to treat these two poems, "Le Brasier" and "Les Fianç-

(1) Breunig, "Apollinaire's Les Fiançailles" pp. 2-3

ailles" , separately. Firstly, it seems to us that the statements which we have made about Apollinaire's use of language in "Le Brasier" and which are also relevant to "Les Fiançailles", illustrate one way in which Apollinaire was approximating the Cubist researches for a more conceptual approach to painting, bearing in mind that Apollinaire never ceased to emphasize the difference between the two media. Where the Cubists fragmented an object into a series of independent planes, Apollinaire fragmented language into levels of meaning and effect ; and where the independent planes in a cubist portrait such as Picasso's "Nu à la Draperie" which he painted in 1907 still combine to make up the object of which they are part, so Apollinaire's images retain a composite identity. But the parallel must not be pressed too far; Apollinaire was not a cubist poet. The similarity which exists is rather one of intention of the artist, than one of the finished works ; and in as much as the means which Apollinaire used to achieve his ends were images of violence as we have defined them (in as much as they impose upon the reader a reality which is not the reality of his own perceptions and in as much as this is often achieved by the subversion of the normal functions of language, or indeed the destructions of these functions as when two words are simply placed together and inter-react by virtue of their juxtaposition) so Apollinaire's technique cannot be regarded as an imitation of the cubists' techniques for we have shown that elements of it are present even in his earliest poetry and that it corresponded to something basic in his character and mode of expression.

Secondly, if Apollinaire was creating a fusion in his poetry, of past and present, here and there, it was a limited one for it was in fact a continuous recreation of himself, as there was a

continuous creation of the poetic universe, and this depended upon a continuous destruction of his past self, in as far as that self is seen as an object. It is significant that this motif continues in his poetry right up to his death and is paralleled by the claim as in "Les Collines", that maturity has succeeded lost youth :

"Au-dessus de Paris un jour
 Combattait deux grands avions
 L'un était rouge et l'autre noir
 Tandis qu'au zénith flamboyait
 L'éternel avion solaire

L'un était toute ma jeunesse
 Et l'autre c'était l'avenir"

+ + + +

"Où donc est tombée ma jeunesse"

Thirdly, to re-iterate a point which is developed at greater length in chapter one, this reconciling of opposing characteristics within one image or expression is a basic part of what Apollinaire saw as the essentially creative function of the poet; he was much later to write to Madeleine Pagès :

"La poésie est (même étymologiquement) la création." (1)

and in a poem a month after the above letter :

"Et le poète est cet observateur de la vie et il invente les lueurs innombrables des mystères qu'il fait repérer." (2)

Two or three months previous to the above quotations, in a long letter, he spoke of his poetic achievements to his new fiancée :

(1) Tendre comme le souvenir, (Letter of 11th August 1915.)

(2) Ibid. 10th Sept. 1915

"Je vous ai dit que 'Vendémiaire' était mon poème préféré d'Alcools. J'y songe, le plus nouveau et le plus lyrique, le plus profond ce sont ces "Fiançailles" dédiées à Picasso dont j'admire l'art sublime (. . .) et nul doute qu'avec "Le Brasier" il ne soit mon meilleur poème sinon le plus immédiatement accessible." (1)

This last quotation reveals not only that Apollinaire still thought highly of "Les Fiançailles" several years later, but also that he must have regarded them as having achieved just that state of poetic creation which he saw as the essential quality of poetry. Clearly what Apollinaire was attempting to achieve in these poems was very dear to him and was still relevant to his ideas on poetry some eight years later in his career. We propose at this point to pass on to an examination of some parts of "Les Fiançailles" to underline what we have said about the first section of "Le Brasier" and to substantiate our claim that these remarks are also relevant to "Les Fiançailles". This done we shall return to the remaining sections of "Le Brasier".

The whole of the first section of "Les Fiançailles" is taken from a poem which Apollinaire probably wrote in 1902, "Le Printemps". There are only one or two minor modifications to this passage as it appears in "Les Fiançailles" and the most important of these is the elimination of the fourth line of the first stanza which identified the mysterious "oiseau bleu" of line three as the "Prince charmant du conte et de tendre aventure" (2)..It is also worth noting the change in the third stanza where the third line in the original is - "Tout l'horizon palpète ainsi que leurs paupières". This becomes in

(1) Tendre comme le souvenir, (Letter of 30th July 1915 (p. 74))

(2) O.P., p. 556

the version used in "Les Fiançailles" - "Les villages lointains sont comme leurs paupières" - another example of Apollinaire moving from the obvious to the mysterious as he reworked his poems. Thus at the beginning of the poem we are confronted with a description, in regular verse form with the exception of the missing last line from the first stanza, of a tender pastoral love scene in which certain mysterious elements serve to lend an air of strangeness. We are also left to wonder why the fiancés are described as "parjures".

The next section creates an abrupt break ; a complete change of tone, rhythm and content. An examination of the early manuscript versions of the poem (I) reveals that the first section of the final version was not present at all in any of the drafts of the poem. So then, we can see that Apollinaire intended this section to play a role similar to that of the initial section of "Le Brasier", and this is amply borne out in the fourth section of the final version :

"J'ai eu le courage de regarder en arrière
 Les cadavres de mes jours
 Marquent ma route et je les pleure
 Les uns pourrissent dans les églises italiennes
 Ou bien dans de petits bois de citronniers" (2)

The poet is underlining for us the role that the first section has been called on to play ; it is a part of his past. If it is not fully obvious to the reader that this section is an extract from a previous poem, it is at least obvious that it is written in a

(I) cf. Déc., pp. 204-208

(2) O.P., p. 130

style which predates that of the rest of the poem. It is true that this may not even emerge fully from the contrast between the first section and the second and subsequent sections, but there can no longer be any doubt after the above quotation, especially as it is followed by the section beginning :

"Pardonnez-moi mon ignorance

Pardonnez-moi de ne plus connaître l'ancien jeu des vers"

L.C. Breunig has said in his analysis of the poem :

"The unwary reader has no way of knowing, for example, that large segments of the work are taken from older unpublished poems, whereas in Apollinaire's own mind their presence was, I believe, of major importance."

We would agree that the presence of these segments is of major importance in the poem and also that the role which they were playing in Apollinaire's mind is much clearer than it is to the reader ; but we cannot agree that the reader has no way of knowing that the first section in particular has the special significance of standing for Apollinaire's past. Breunig goes on to say :

"In a poem the very subject of which was the change from an old style to a new what could be more appropriate than the insertion of earlier pieces in a new context". (1)

Again we agree, but again also we insist that this is in some measure communicated to the reader. Let us compare the integration of another stanza from "Le Printemps" into "L'Emigrant de Landor Road" (2) with the use of previously composed sections in "Les Fiançailles" and we shall immediately see that it was Apollinaire's

(1) Both quotations from Breunig: "Apollinaire's Les Fiançailles" p.3

(2) cf. section three, pp. 78-79

intention that these sections should be seen to be what they are.

This stanza, the final one in the poem and therefore the more important for its position, is completely integrated into the poem and the reader has no way of knowing that it is taken from another poem, indeed he is not intended to know.

"Gonfle-toi vers la nuit O Mer Les yeux des squales

Jusqu'à l'aube ont guetté de loin avidement

Des cadavres de jours rongés par les étoiles

Parmi le bruit des flots et les derniers serments" (I)

At the most elementary level, the verse form of this stanza is the same as that of most of the rest of the poem. Moreover its imagery is in harmony with the imagery of the rest of the poem (the emigrant is already at sea, his past has already been seen as "journées veuves" and "années. . .enchaînées") and what is more the tone of the stanza is entirely fitting to the climax of the poem.

On the other hand the section from "Les Fiançailles", coming as it does at the beginning of the poem, introduces not only a mood and an atmosphere but also images of a much more traditional type than are to be found in the rest of the poem, particularly such images as :

"Et les roses de l'électricité s'ouvrent encore

Dans le jardin de ma mémoire" (2)

Thus while it may be fair for Breunig to say that the extracts from previous poems that are present in "Les Fiançailles" are of greater significance to Apollinaire than to the reader, for after

(I) O.P., p. 106

(2) O.P., p. 131

all Apollinaire was aware of their exact context in the poems from which they had been taken, and probably also his feelings and ideas at the time when he wrote these poems, it is not true that the reader is unable to see that the initial section at least is included as an example of Apollinaire's early style, and that consequently, the rest of the poem is in some measure a comment upon it.

We may also see as evidence in support of this the fact that Apollinaire changed the order of the fragments in the manuscript "Les Paroles Etoiles" (I) so that the section which was formerly the fourth in the final version comes after the first and now begins :

"Mes amis m'ont enfin avoué leur mépris
 Je buvais à pleins verres les étoiles
 Un ange a exterminé pendant que je dormais
 Les agneaux les pasteurs des tristes bergeries
 De faux centurions emportaient le vinaigre" (2)

The first line of this section may quite fairly be seen as reflecting back on the previous section so that the poet is saying, "If this is the kind of poetry I write then my friends are right to admit their scorn." And reading the first line in relation to the rest of this section - my friends admitted their scorn because "Je buvais etc. . .". The poet's approval of his friends' action is easily discerned in the following lines :

"Un ange a exterminé pendant que je dormais
 Les agneaux les pasteurs des tristes bergeries"

(I) cf. Déc., pp. 204-205

(2) O.P., p. 129

What the poet is saying here, not without a wry humour, is that the world changed and the pastoral/symbolist images of the next line were no longer appropriate to the condition of modern man, but he was not aware of this change and continued to write in these terms. But the lambs and shepherds also combine with the next line --

"De faux centurions emportaient le vinaigre"

- to present a tableau in which the birth and death of a Christ figure are laid before the reader. There is however a note that jars in this image, the centurions are described as false. If the persecutors are false, then it follows that the martyrdom is also false; i.e. in attempting to convey spiritual truth through the perfection of his poetry (the symbolist concept of the role of the poet) the poet-Christ is martyred, but because these truths and images are no longer relevant to the modern world, the martyrdom is not of any value, no salvation is achieved by it.

This interpretation becomes even more obvious when the original version of this section is examined :

"Mes amis, ne craignez pas de m'avouer votre mépris

J'ai l'orgueil de me souvenir de mes souhaits glorieux

(J'ai rêvé) de poèmes si grandioses que j'ai dû les laisser inachevés

Moi-même j'ai tenté de rythmer

Parce que mon souci de perfection

Dépassait mon goût même et les forces d'un seul homme

(Puis j'ai reconnu que chaque moment porte en soi sa propre perfection)

Mais j'ai eu cette force ce goût et cette science

Et je me suis endormi

Un ange a exterminé pendant mon sommeil

Les agneaux, les pasteurs des tristes bergeries.

De faux centurions emportaient le vinaigre
 Les yeux mal-blessés par l'épuration dansaient
 Puis après la fuite et la mort de mes vérités poétiques
 Je m'éveillai au bout de cinq ans" (1)

It is clear that the scorn of his friends is levelled at the kind of poetry that Apollinaire used to write (one may even see in the lines "Mais j'ai eu . . . bergeries" a direct reference to the poem "Le Larron", given recent interpretations of this poem such as that of Scott Bates, (2) because it is no longer relevant to the modern world. But whereas in the original version this section follows the section beginning "Pardonnez-moi mon ignorance. . .", in the final version it follows an example of this very kind of poetry, complete with religious symbolism in the second stanza. And here, perhaps we see the reason for the suppression of the fourth line of the first verse -

"Prince charmant du conte et de tendre aventure"

- for if Apollinaire had admitted that this section was only a fairy tale, a playful fantasy, as is abundantly clear in the original from this line and the third last verse, he would have been deprived of the ability to make the blue bird stand as a rather precious and mysterious symbol, which the rest of the poem would show to be irrelevant to the modern world.

Finally, by saying -

"Etoiles de l'éveil je n'en connais aucune"

- the poet is obviously admitting that the stars which he had been

(1) cf. Déc., p. 205

(2) cf. Scott Bates, "The identity of Apollinaire's Le Larron", in French Review, October 1966.

drinking (line 2) are the poetic truths which belong to the world of the poetry of spiritual quests and this in the "Paroles Etoiles" version is beyond any doubt identified to the poetry he had been writing up to this time :

"Puis après la fuite et la mort de mes vérités poétiques
Je m'éveillai au bout de cinq ans"

Thus, after this somewhat lengthy development we think it quite clearly demonstrated that the initial sections of "Le Brasier" and "Les Fiançailles" have the same role to play, namely, to stand as examples of the kind of poetry that Apollinaire is renouncing in these two poems. If we have gone to such lengths to develop this point, it is because we wish to show now that the other sections of both poems exploit on a large scale the techniques of violence, and that the insertion of these sections into the two poems in itself conforms to those techniques.

Let us now return to the remaining sections of "Le Brasier". The only thing that links the second section to the first is the continuation of the imagery of fire. There is a discontinuity between the lines that is not smoothed over as it is in the first section by the regularity of the rhythm and verse form. The poet here is undergoing martyrdom, not a false martyrdom like that already discussed in "Les Fiançailles", but a real one. The destruction of his past is carried right up to the present moment so that, in this auto da fe, the poet is undergoing a continuous process of self-regeneration, by being the fire which consumes his own past. Thus he is able to say -

"Je suffis pour l'éternité à entretenir le feu de mes délices"(I)

(I) O.P., p. 109, and all other quotations from this poem.

Through his martyrdom the poet achieves new life, and assumes the powers of creativity and prophecy that he makes so central to his great poem "Les Collines". On the whole this section serves as a transition from section one to the final section in which the techniques of violence come into their own.

Having separated himself from the rest of mankind the poet, in the third and final section of the poem, will exploit images of surprise and mystery in order to maintain the role of one who is initiated into the secrets of the universe. The section opens with a vision of the sun crossing the sky, but a sun which, because of its associations with light and flame, is the future, hidden from man but open to the poet's gaze, because of the martyrdom which he has suffered and is suffering, should he dare to lift his eyes to see. These three opening lines follow logically in both tone and content from the preceding section ; but the fourth line comes as a complete surprise, where the reader might expect the poet to draw back the curtain and reveal the future, he finds :

"Nous attendons ton bon plaisir ô mon amie" (I)

There is no clue as to the identity of the "amie", she has not previously entered into the poem, and, indeed, in the third stanza of the first section the poet seemed to have renounced love and women as a source of inspiration for his poetry :

"L'amour est devenu mauvais"

Nor is there any further reference to this mysterious woman in the remainder of the section. One may suggest various meanings for the line, but none can be ascribed to it with any degree of certainty, nor do we think that the poet intended this line to be

understood in the normal sense of the word. (Of course, those with a detailed knowledge of the life of the poet are entitled to see in this line a reference to Marie Laurencin whose meeting with the poet in 1907 did much to help him out of the period of crisis which he had undergone, but this is purely marginal to the poem.) The function of this line is surely to upset the reader's expectations, to do violence to his ideas of what the evolution of the poem ought to be. If we look at the visual presentation of the poem on the page, and this is something that is important in Apollinaire's poetry before he began composing calligrammes, we can see that the first three lines of this section represent one movement, that the fourth line breaks abruptly from this and stands in isolation, as do the fifth and sixth lines, while lines seven to eleven are put together in the form of a verse. These three isolated lines are all there to do one thing principally and that is to interrupt the flow of the poem, to surprise the reader, to act rapidly on him, which is why they are each only one line images ; there is no time for any development.

"J'ose à peine regarder la divine mascarade"

This line introduces a note of fear which has hitherto been absent from the poet's confident acceptance of his martyrdom and the destruction of the past. It is suddenly made clear to the reader that the poet's entrance to the world of esoteric knowledge is a difficult and dangerous one, that he who dares to look upon the gods risks being blinded. Perhaps now, in retrospect we may see in the preceding line a plea for support from the poet to his "amie".

"Quand bleuira sur l'horizon la Désirade" (I)

(I) cf. "La Chanson" O.P., p.54 - "Mon île au loin ma Désirade" - once again the presence of the woman as a haven of security.

With this line the reader is confronted with a "cri de coeur", the poet's longing for the promised land. Again we are surprised, for the tone of the poem, the praise of fire and its virtues of purification have led us to believe that the poet has joyfully accepted his fate, that he has raised himself to the level of the Gods.

Thus with three quick thrusts the poet has completely disorientated his readers and although these three lines may be seen to have some other function i.e. the expression of the poet's feelings in his situation, it must be clear that their principal function is to take the reader aback, to surprise him rather than to convey information to him. Having done this the poet now begins to translate his Promethean experiences :

"Au-delà de notre atmosphère s'élève un théâtre

Que construisit le ver Zamir sans instrument"

We know from an article that Apollinaire wrote about his friend André Salmon, what the "ver Zamir" meant for him -

"Le ver Zamir qui sans outils pouvait bâtir le temple de Jérusalem, quelle saisissante image du poète." ((1)

- and Madame Durry has elucidated the sources of this image in an article (2), therefore we do not propose to duplicate her work here; but, in any case, if the precise nature of the "ver Zamir" remains obscure to the reader of the poem, there can be no doubt of the efficacy of the image as an illustration of the powers of creativity in a non-physical sense, and hence by extension of the creative powers of the imagination. It is not, then, the exotic element that is introduced by naming the "ver Zamir" that interests

(1) O.C. t.3 p.822 (article in Vers et Prose, juin-août 1908)

(2) La Table Ronde, avril 1955 no. 88, pp. 138-141

us specifically here, although this has its role to play in the surprise that the reader feels on being confronted by this image; but rather the unreal aspect of the image.

"Au-delà de notre atmosphère . . ."

- these first words seem to transport us back to the "hauteurs où pense la lumière", to the spiritual world of the opening of this section of the poem; but the following - "s'élève un théâtre" - strains the imagination, forces it into a mental picture of some kind of theatre suspended in a void (an image which is more readily conceivable to us in this second half of the twentieth century). Then the next line destroys all remaining connections with reality and the image leaves the visual plane to remain in the mind of the reader as a sensation, as a presence of something created rather than as a picture which can be related to something we know. The image is a demonstration of the creative power of the poet and of the unreal aspect of his creations; later the poet will call them "surnaturel" and later still "surréal". The evolution of his theories had already reached the definition of "surnaturalisme" before he began to use the word itself, as is made clear in chapter one, section one, and as is also apparent from the following quotation contemporary with the composition of "Les Fiançailles" :

"Le poète est analogue à la divinité. Il sait que dans sa création la vérité est indéfectible. Il admire son ouvrage. Il connaît l'erreur qui anime sa créature, fausse au regard de nos visions mais qui présente aux puissances momentanées une vérité éternelle. Aussi l'organisme d'une créature poétique ne contient-il pas moins de perfection que celui d'une de celles qui tombent sous nos sens. Et bien que le poète soit agité au hasard, la fatalité domine sa créature.

Chaque jour une volonté toute puissante change l'ordre des choses, contrarie les causes et les effets et anéantit le souvenir et la vérité même de ce qui existait la veille pour créer une succession d'événements établissant une nouvelle vérité. Tel est l'ouvrage poétique : la fausseté d'une réalité anéantie. Et le souvenir même a disparu. La comparaison est impossible. La vie et la vérité sont indéniables." (I)

Thus Apollinaire defines in prose the complex nature of poetic truth as he tries to express it in the form of poetry in "Le Brasier".

This fantastic image of the "ver Zamir" is followed by three lines which return us to the apparent world of our own perceptions, the intention of the poet being to make us feel the separation of the world of the poem, his world and ours :

"Puis le soleil revint ensoleiller les places

D'une ville marine apparue contremont

Sur les toits se reposaient les colombes lasses"

A peaceful picture of the ordinary world where the sunlight is not the terrible burning, purifying light that the poet endures but the gentle illumination of the landscape. This image surprises us by its very lack of force, by the power of understatement almost. Perhaps also, in situating his town by the sea the poet intends to express the distance which lies between the "paquebot et ma vie renouvelée" and the town from which nonetheless these new phenomena are just visible but not comprehensible as the sun is visible to, yet far beyond the reach of, the tired doves resting on the rooftops of the town. The poet's metaphorical flight carries him

(I) La Phalange, août 1908, O.C. t.3, p.798

well above the physical flight of the doves. Having momentarily returned us to the world familiar to us, the poet immediately whisks us away again :

"Et le troupeau de sphinx regagne la sphingerie" (I)

Here not content with surprising us by the introduction of the sphinxes, the poet also refuses to allow our idea of the sphinx to influence the image, for he presents them as a herd or flock returning to the fold, under the care of the herdsman, and in so doing he achieves a note of humour in an image which in its multiple appearances in European literature has not been at all connected with anything except the tragic and the dramatic. That is not to say that the poet destroys the classical associations of the image, rather he achieves a fusion of these elements which is astonishing to us. Little wonder that in the near future the poet was to take as his device "J'émervaille!" As to the meaning of the image, it is the essential characteristic of the sphinx to be an enigma which perishes when the solution is found (perhaps the poet is offering us an auto-destructive image!) and perhaps the poet is the herdsman who parades them before us but who also shepherds them back to the fold. That is to say that the sphinxes are most probably symbolic of the mystery and also the violence of the poet's images.

The next two lines present us with a picture of the continuous flux of creation and destruction of the universe that is unexpected in a man who died before these theories of the universe became fashionable in our century. The impossible theatre (according to the laws of the universe as we know them) is composed of "le

(I) Cf. "L'Enchanteur pourrissant"

feu solide" - even the material is beyond the grasp of the imagination as the stars are beyond our physical reach.

The passage which follows exposes the limitations of the poet and of his bid for knowledge of the "divine masquerade". We are reminded that the martyr's pyre, to which there has been no direct reference in this section, consumes, and that the poet is accomplishing an act of self-immolation. The poet's flight, as we saw in comparison to that of the birds, is metaphorical; he has reached the regions "où pense la lumière" while sitting in his seat :

" Et voici le spectacle

Et pour toujours je suis assis dans un fauteuil

Ma tête mes genoux mes coudes vain pentacle

Les flammes ont poussé sur moi comme des feuilles"

The poet, immobile in body, has soared to the heavens in spirit, but this cannot be done with impunity. The magic figure of the pentacle, in which the enchanter may conjure up presences that are not of this world, is in vain formed by the poet. He is consumed by his own imagination - "Les flammes ont poussé sur moi comme des feuilles". Thus in achieving his vision of the future the poet destroys himself, he has gone beyond the limit of his powers.

"Des acteurs inhumains claires bêtes nouvelles

Donnent des ordres aux hommes apprivoisés"

Who are these strange creatures to whom the future belongs? Might we not see here the release of the powers of man's subconscious mind, which for the moment the poet fears, which for the moment he sees as monsters of the id? The image remains mysterious, of another world, but if we compare it with this image from "Les

Collines" -

"Profondeurs de la conscience

On vous explorera demain

Et qui sait quels êtres vivants

Seront tirés de ces abîmes

Avec des univers entiers" (1)

- might we not conclude that Apollinaire is talking about the same thing, but that whereas in "Le Brasier" he feels the power of his imagination failing, and his confidence in his ability to sustain his new vision of the world weakens, in "Les Collines" he can say :

" voici le temps

Où l'on connaîtra l'avenir

Sans mourir de sa connaissance" (2)

So that if "Le Brasier" ends with an image of death in the pursuit of this knowledge this is not the final word that the poet has to say upon the subject, but rather that having come so far he feels unable to continue. But the phoenix will rise from the ashes. This final section is in some ways a declaration of the setting at liberty of the imagination. This is visible not only in the content and imagery of the poem but also in the jumps from one passage to another that the reader's imagination is forced to make. There is already something of the character of automatic writing in this section of the poem, although the manuscripts leave no doubt that this effect is a deliberate one and not the effect of hasard and free association. Nevertheless the final section of this poem is clearly a "succession d'événements établissant une

(1) O.P., p. 172

(2) O.P., p. 174

nouvelle vérité" and in order for it to be this the poet must in his own words - "(anéantir) le souvenir et la vérité même de ce qui existait la veille"; and it is here that we have shown that the violence of his imagery is central to the poem's aspirations. Without this violence the unreal, or surreal, world of the poem would be caught in the net of the reader's conscious perceptions of reality, and would look, as does any fish out of water, absurd. The power of the images, the power of the poem as a whole is the persuasive power of violence, and this is also true of "Les Fiançailles" by considering the appearance of the poem in the volume. It consists of nine separate sections each of which is printed on a separate page, although this space is by no means necessitated by the length of the sections. Therefore, although in the final version of the poem the sections are not numbered, it is clear that the poet intended each section of the poem to stand as an independent and complete whole first of all and then as a part of the poem in relation to the whole poem and to the other parts. This is an important consideration, for as we have already seen the relationship of the first section to the second has a very important role to play in the meaning of the poem. Clearly, if the poet had not allowed the reader to assimilate the first section on its own, then the effect of contradiction obtained from the second section would have been considerably attenuated, and the poem as a whole would have lost in tension and in energy.

This contradiction which the poet establishes between sections of the poem is carried over into the sections themselves often so that one line contradicts or modifies another, but always the author allows each line, or group of lines, its own integrity before introducing the element calculated to change the reader's

attitude to what he has just read. We shall examine this proposition in detail to show that the poem depends for its success on this violence, for no element of the poem destroys any other completely, therefore the conflict is renewed each time we turn to the poem.

As we have already examined section one in some detail let us now begin with section two. (Section one being, as we have said, the introductory section in which one is faced with the enigmatic description of the fiancés as "parjures", and in which the poet deliberately increases the mystic and mysterious note of his rather precious verses.) In the first nine lines of the section there is absolutely no carry-over from one line to the other ; each line is heavily end-stopped (except line three) and each line changes in imagery from the previous one even if one can establish a connection between lines three, four and five :

"Un ange a exterminé pendant que je dormais

Les agneaux les pasteurs des tristes bergeries

De faux centurions emportaient le vinaigre"

This broken rhythm, this disconnected imagery has a very definite effect on the reader's sensibility ; a calculated effect : that of depriving him of any hold on the poem and instead establishing the poem's hold over him. Line two does not follow from line one nor line three from line two etc. but this does not mean there is no relationship between them. The very fact of their physical proximity establishes this relationship just as the relationship of one section of the poem to another is established by the physical proximity of these sections within the poem as a whole. Clearly there is a connection between these two things and just as clearly this is what must be understood by the term juxtaposition when it

is applied as it has been by almost all critics to the poetry of Apollinaire.

Thus while one is surprised to find the line -

"Je buvais à pleins verre les étoiles"

- coming after the first line, one nevertheless has to establish a relationship between them, and the surprise one feels is increased when one discovers that the most readily understood relationship between these lines is a causal one. By simply juxtaposing these two lines, Apollinaire has, as it were, been able to insert an unwritten because in between them. But by not writing this because he has at the same time left the relationship of the lines much more open, and so given each line a kind of liberty and autonomy which increases the surprise that the reader feels on reading them. As we have said, because the two lines are juxtaposed, the reader quite readily establishes a relationship between them, but the poet has no intention of allowing this to happen too easily, as this would simply replace the old imposition of a meaning by the poet on the lines by a new imposition of meaning by the reader, which would immediately destroy the liberty with which he has endowed his lines. So Apollinaire reinforces the break between the lines by the break between images. Where one image does not follow from another, but rather contrasts and conflicts with it, the reader is forced to accept the autonomy of each before any relationship can be established between them.

Thus in the lines -

"Etoiles de l'éveil je n'en connais aucune

Les becs de gaz pissaient leur flamme au clair de lune"

- by mentioning the "Etoiles de l'éveil" the poet first calls to mind a picture of the morning stars, before denying it, and then

because these two lines are linked by rhyme, the gas-lights become the poet's morning stars, and his awakening is to the ugliness of the city which is described in the following lines. This is even clearer in the manuscript *Les Paroles Etoiles* (I) :

"Je m'éveillai au bout de cinq ans (et suivit) une nuit
/citadine

Les becs de gaz pissaient leur flamme au clair de lune"

But here the conflict of the "Etoiles de l'éveil" and the gas-lights is lacking, and the manuscript draft is unquestionably weaker.

The imagery of the first section, of the poetry of the poet's sleep, is in sharp contrast with the imagery that follows his awakening :

"Des croque-morts avec des bocks tintaient des glas
A la carte des bougies tombaient vaille que vaille
Des faux cols sur des flots de jupes mal brossées
Des accouchées masquées fêtaient leurs relevailles"

This contrast is made more poignant and meaningful when one is aware that these lines are also taken from an early poem, "Les Villes sont pleines", (2) which Apollinaire probably wrote about a year after "Le Printemps", from which the first section is taken. In this case we think that L.C. Breunig is justified in saying that the reader cannot be aware of the extra significance this would have for Apollinaire (3), but nonetheless he can be fully aware of the contrast between this kind of imagery and the imagery

(1) cf. *Déc.*, pp. 204-5

(2) *O.P.*, p. 563

(3) cf. Breunig, "Apollinaire's *Les Fiançailles*" p.3

of the first section, and indeed of the first part of this section. And the establishment of this conflict is clearly the poet's intention.

The ugliness of the city is here not limited to an expression of the quality of the environment, but is carried into the inhabitants of the city as well, hence the morbid note arising from the introduction of the undertakers and the presence of the prostitutes, although this latter revelation of the face of love is not as heavily insisted upon as it is in "Les Villes sont pleines". The opposition of "Les ombres qui passaient" to the fiançés of the first section is clear. This is not, however, the only way in which these lines are intended to act upon the reader; Apollinaire still intends to astonish us and to keep an element of mystery. This he does by changing his original versions of the fourth and second last lines of this section so that from being -

"La ville aux feux de nuits semblait un archipel"

and - "Mais à mes yeux de mâle horreur je me rappelle"

- they become -

"La ville cette nuit semblait un archipel"

and - "Et sombre sombre fleuve je me rappelle"

In the first case he has removed the middle term which explains the bringing together of a town and an archipelago, so that the resulting image loses its visual aspect to become a metaphor of the isolation of the individual within the group, but at the same time it acquires an element of surprise and mystery which increase its suggestive powers. In the second case the banal "Mais à mes yeux de mâle horreur" is replaced by the mysterious "Et sombre sombre fleuve" which seems to combine the darkness of the night with the image of the islands in the sea which divides them from

each other. Yet so unexpected is the introduction of the dark river that its effect is multiplied by its strangeness and mystery.

Thus the second section seems to contain the kind of poetry which is to be preferred to the example given in section one, both by the poet's friends and the poet himself now that he has awakened and is aware of the angel's passage. If we say seems it is because this indeed is the impression that the reader takes from this passage, but the poem does not end there.

It is, then, all the more surprising that the third section should begin with an affirmation of the poet's inability to express himself. Having seemingly achieved the kind of expression which would seem appropriate to the modern poet, the inhabitant of the city, the poet goes on to say :

"Je n'ai plus même pitié de moi

Et ne puis exprimer mon tourment de silence"

So, in retrospect the latter part of the second section can also be seen as just another kind of poetry which is irrelevant to the poet's situation, especially as the imagery seems to be a rejection of women as a source of inspiration - "Les ombres qui passaient n'étaient jamais jolies". Because of this tension, this contradiction which arises between one section and the next, we feel it necessary to reserve our agreement on Breunig's statements concerning the passages inserted from previous poems. For again, if the origins of this passage (lines 9-18) are not exposed to the reader, he is nevertheless capable of seeing that they serve as an example of an outmoded style.

This is all the more obvious as the first line of section three would seem to correspond to the first line of section two, and so should be seen as an admission by the poet that his friends

are right to mock him. And if the poet is still caught in a "tourment de silence", then whatever the contrast between what he has written in the first section and what he has written in the second section, the latter is no more relevant to him now than is the former, hence, no doubt, the fact that Apollinaire chose his extracts from poems which are roughly contemporary.

The metamorphosis of the next line, which deprives the poet of his ability to express himself, is a mysterious one and one which eludes any direct explanation. However, linguistic studies of symbolist poetry reveal the word "étoile" to be, by frequency of its appearances, one of the key words of symbolism. And in P. Giraud's index to the vocabulary of "Alcools"(1), we find that it ranks third among the key words of "Alcools". Yet it is only very infrequently to be found in the poems composed after "Les Fiançailles".(2) In this light it does not seem outrageous to suggest that Apollinaire was aware of the heavy burden the word is made to bear in symbolist poetry and that here he is using the word as an example of a word that has been worn out by overuse and

(1) Cf. P. Giraud "Index du vocabulaire du symbolisme - I", Paris, (Klingsieck) 1953.

(2) In fact, of all the poems included in "Alcools" and composed after "Les Fiançailles" the only times the word "étoile" appears ^{are} ~~is~~ in the following line from "Zone" in which it has almost a note of description about it -

"Ils ont foi dans leur étoile comme les rois-mages"
- (the "Ils" in question being the poor emigrants in the Gare Saint-Lazare) and also in "Poème lu au mariage d'André Salmon".

by association with poetic aims which he now rejects. Certainly this would be consistent with his use of the word in line two of the preceding section. But this would be rather beyond the comprehension of his readers and so he cannot have meant this to be the only function of his metamorphosis. What he is saying, is then, perhaps explicable in the light of the following lines :

"Tous les mots que j'avais à dire se sont changés en étoiles

Un Icare tente de s'élever jusqu'à chacun de mes yeux

Et porteur de soleils je brûle au centre de deux nébuleuses"

These lines can be interpreted in the sense that the poet's words have changed to stars and so become something that is beyond the reach of humanity, as he himself now is as the bearer of fire which will destroy anyone who approaches him and is destroying him at the same time.

The very scale of the imagery here is surprising to us after the meanness of the city streets, and the feeble vulgarity of their illumination. Here we are seeking the poet consumed by the fire of "Le Brasier". After this description the poet seems to say that his powers have deserted him and that he had for a moment seen himself as Christ at the second coming, worshipped by the dead and heralding the end of the world only to find that it is his own end that is rushing upon him. The tone of the whole of the passage is surely that of self-irony; the poet is mocking the seriousness with which he regarded himself and his poetic ambitions previously. The grandeur of the imagery is in that case not to be taken seriously either, and so by the last line of the section the poet transforms its meaning for us, and rather than indulging in self-pity as Margaret Davies has suggested (1), the poet is in fact destroying

(1) cf. Margaret Davies, "Apollinaire" p. 151

the megalomaniac dimensions of his old ambitions.

However, after the Apocalypse not all has been destroyed, for the next section opens on a note of cool self-analysis which explains many of the poem's difficulties. The manuscript entitled "Les Paroles Etoiles" had the third section of the final version in first place; this following fourth section came in second place. This order helps to confirm the interpretations we have advanced of section three and will advance for section four, for it shows that section three was originally to play the role that is played in the final version by the extract from "Le Printemps" (i.e. to make us aware that Apollinaire was a bad poet) and consequently section four in being a self-analysis which admits to past weaknesses is meant to make us feel that the poet has achieved some sort of maturity.

So the first line -

"J'ai eu le courage de regarder en arrière"

- in its calm matter-of-factness switches the reader away from the cosmic vision of the preceding section, and creates the distance necessary for him to see it for what it is, should this not already be apparent to him. Again the poet is refusing to allow us to remain in any one mood, to allow us to see in only one light anything he says. The poem is a commentary upon itself in the same way that a piece of "faux bois" incorporated into a collage is a comment upon the imitation of wood (or anything else for that matter) in art, as well as being a representation of wood. We offer this as an analogy and not as an indication that Apollinaire was applying Cubist principles to poetry - in any case the collage had not been invented at the time of composition of "Les Fiançailles".

The tone of this section is that of self-analysis, as we

have said; it is also the familiar confessional tone of much of Apollinaire's poetry as we have already seen in "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé", for example.

"Adieu faux amour confondu
Avec la femme qui s'éloigne
Avec celle que j'ai perdue
L'année dernière en Allemagne
Et que je ne reverrai plus" (I)

The similarity is not only in the tone, but also in the inclusion of biographical detail which because of its unknown quantity effect, as far as the ordinary reader is concerned, lends a poignance to the imagery, which is in any case rather too sentimental. From across the threshold of maturity the poet is looking back at his youth, including his love scenes in the lemon groves that have served as material for the poetry of the kind in the first section. But at the same time these lemon trees serve also as a symbol of the new immediacy and intensity that the poet is attempting to achieve in his poetry :

" de petits bois de citronniers
Qui fleurissent et fructifient
En même temps et en toute saison"

The word which springs to mind in connection with this image is simultaneity, and clearly the germ of much of Apollinaire's later thinking is present here. Returning to our consideration of the poem as a whole we may say that Apollinaire intended its various sections to exist simultaneously with one another. That he is here juxtaposing his past, his present and his future, so that as well

as writing a poem about the problems of writing poetry, he is presenting a simultaneous portrait of himself. Once again we find that Apollinaire arrived at the concept before he arrived at the word which he was eventually to use to describe it and as we shall see in our discussion of "Calligrammes" it was his own ideas of simultaneity which were relevant to Apollinaire's discussions of Delaunay's paintings and to his own poems of that period. Here, of course, the idea of simultaneity is not fully developed, we must not forget that the poet describes his past as -

"Les cadavres de mes jours"

- whereas in a truly simultaneous poem his past would have been a living presence in the poem, which it is in "Les Fiançailles" only in the sense that the examples taken from his past in the form of poetry must be alive enough to maintain the source of conflict between the sections of the poem which is the poet's principal weapon of surprise.

The section ends on a very complex image which may be seen as the kind of poetry which will enable the poet to express himself:

"D'autres jours ont pleuré avant de mourir dans des tavernes
Où d'ardents bouquets rouaient
Aux yeux d'une mulâtresse qui inventait la poésie
Et les roses de l'électricité s'ouvrent encore
Dans le jardin de ma mémoire"

Although the poem is about the writing of poetry this is the first time that we actually encounter the word "poésie" (it does not appear at all in "Le Brasier") and this is not without significance. The first three lines quoted above may be taken as an expression of the weepy sentimentality and the temptation to open sensuality to which the poet is prey, especially when his faculties are impaired

rejected the close, perhaps too close, association of the roses and the gas-lights, he has nonetheless retained the element of similarity between them, by transferring the "de l'électricité" to the roses. This, of course, also changes what he was saying about the poetry invented by the "mulâtresse" which, in the final version, loses its associations with the modern world but acquires thereby a more sensual element through its simplified associations with the "mulâtresse". Undoubtedly the final version is more surprising than the original, for whatever unusual value might have been present in the phrase "la poésie de l'électricité", is more than made up for by the surprise which the poet creates in the juxtaposition of the two conflicting images.

By relegating the symbols of the city to his memory, the poet, while admitting their continued presence in his mind, is rejecting the role of the "poète citadin". He is not content to describe the city as writers of previous centuries have been the poets of the countryside. Implied in this rejection of these two types of poetry is the idea of the present maturity of the poet which will find its expression elsewhere. That is to say not in the kinds of poetry symbolised in the images described above, but at the same time in the complexity of the passage as a whole. His poetry will be the poetry of surprise and juxtaposition of seemingly unrelated elements which refuses to allow the reader the comfort of a recognisable genre, or of a simple and sustained mood. Duality of function is the key to this new imagery, arising from the autonomy of the elements which allows the "ardents bouquets" and the "roses de l'électricité" to be themselves as well as conflicting elements of the complex whole. Our analysis here, we think, goes beyond what the reader can really be expected to seize by himself at this

point, although we think that we have expressed no more than Apollinaire intended to express here. Perhaps the connections between the elements of this last part of the section are not quite as inevitable as the poet intended to make them (the "Et les roses" is probably a bit weak) and consequently one has to try harder to grasp the significance of this section than should be necessary.

The next section of the poem, the fifth, begins by asking our indulgence ; the resemblance to the "Ayez pitié de moi" of "La Jolie Rousse", in tone at least, is inescapable. We cannot really take either at its face value; in this case not only is there the contrast with the significance of the end of the preceding section but there is also the fact that we have now read four sections of the poem and are beginning to see how the poem as a whole is functioning and what makes it different from the "ancien jeu des vers" which the poet has forgotten. There is also implied in the word "ancien" the idea that it is no longer relevant to anyone in the twentieth century to write poems in this manner. At the same time the poet may be genuinely asking our indulgence for this new form of poetry ; after all it is highly experimental and is breaking with a tradition which has survived for hundreds of years.

Declaring this, then, the poet is making a tabula rasa for himself to begin the creation of the new poetry -

"Je ne sais plus rien et j'aime uniquement"

- he is adopting the position of the artistic primitive who has nothing but his love to express. Clearly the love which he has to express is not simply his attachment to a woman but rather a sentiment of which the whole of humanity is the object, which is

the love of life itself.

The section begins with three lines of statement, bare of imagery, so that the fourth line with its visual element carries all the more weight, but this line compared with a similar one in "Le Brasier" -

"Dans la plaine ont poussé des flammes"

- is weak. It is weak because the image of the flame has not been given the development in this poem which it received in "Le Brasier", and so the metamorphosis of flower to flame here seems to be purely destructive, whereas we assume the poet to be saying that the flowers, elements of the real world, are to him only the material for creation, in the sense that the flame is the symbol of the power of his imagination, which transmutes them. This may become clearer from the next two lines in which the poet assumes a God-like attitude to creation :

"Je médite divinement

Et je souris des êtres que je n'ai pas créés"

Again the first line of these two is felt much more if it is considered in the light of a similar statement in "Le Brasier" :

"Descendant des hauteurs où pense la lumière"

In saying "Je médite divinement" the poet is according to the creatures of his imagination the same status as is possessed by those creatures created by God, or the creator of the visual universe. Hence the fact that the poet can afford to smile at those beings whom he himself has not created for he knows that they are no different from the ones which he can and does create. But the next three lines place certain limitations on the poet's creative powers :

"Mais si le temps venait où l'ombre enfin solide

Se multipliait en réalisant la diversité formelle de mon

/amour

J'admèrerai mon ouvrage"

The poet seems to be saying that the creative powers which he has just claimed apply only to the realms of his imagination and that he has not yet been able to render these shadows solid, by endowing them with poetic form. Thus his love, his motive power, has outstripped his poetic abilities, and so the note of apology at the beginning of the section comes to seem more genuine.

This section as a whole seems less powerful than the preceding ones ; its tone is for the most part the fairly flat tone of a direct statement and as such does present a contrast with the preceding section, does take on the authority of one speaking calmly after the efforts of sections two, three and four, but it has more need of being followed by the reader than were the other sections which seek to impose themselves on the reader. That is not to say that it is a failure ; the poet is here achieving his ends by understatement (in the tone) which is all the more effective because of the tensions of the rest of the poem. Nevertheless this does mean that this key section does not depend upon violence to achieve its ends ; but then the techniques of violence have to be combined with other technical means if the poet is to achieve breadth of expression in his work.

The next section, the sixth, has no original in the "Paroles Etoiles" manuscript, in which the preceding section was followed by the section which became the second in the final version. It is almost a shock in itself to find that the poem does not end on the qualified note of self praise -

"J'admèrerai mon ouvrage"

- but not only does it continue, it does so with a statement which seems so totally irrelevant that it takes the reader completely by surprise :

"J'observe le repos du dimanche

Et je loue la paresse"

If one can see in the first line a continuation of the poet's view of himself as God, resting on the seventh day, what is one to make of the second line, where he praises one of the seven deadly sins? And this is followed by the earnestly expressed question -

"Comment comment réduire

L'infiniment petite science

Que m'imposent mes sens"

- meaning perhaps how can he go beyond the experience of the world which is imposed on him by his senses? If this is so, then why does he use the word "reduce"? Perhaps so that the experience of the imagination may become more important. Surprise has again become the principal element of the imagery. We cannot for the moment penetrate the meaning of these first lines, and so we read on discovering the poet's strange description of his senses. The description of the first of these leads us through so many similes that we cannot find their common factor and the identity of the sense escapes us. But the imagery communicates to us an impression of vastness, and cyclical change which leads us to think it timeless, and then we find this strange and disturbing image :

"Il vit décapité sa tête est le soleil

Et la lune son cou tranché"

We cannot escape the impression of an almost hysterical act of self-immolation, such as that which takes place in "Le Brasier",

which leads to some kind of communion with the universe. But there seems to be some kind of dichotomy existing between the sun and the moon images, by which the poet expresses a liberation of self leading to knowledge, his head has become the sun looking down upon the earth and other men and so seeing all that they can and will do, while the decapitated body remains as the moon, a dead planet which can only reflect the light of the sun.

"Je voudrais éprouver une ardeur infinie"

This line obviously plays on the double meaning of the word "ardeur" which is both a passion and a real burning, the desire to be consumed and the act of self-consumption as in "Le Brasier" where the poet is at the same time both the body consumed by the flame and the flame itself. This seems to reflect back on the sun/moon image and reinforces the idea that the moon and the discarded body are being set aside in the quest for the experience which the poet desires. Now we find the sense of the first two lines becoming clearer, for if the poet is relying upon his head to provide his experiences then there is no need for him to move, his mobility is the mobility of the imagination, as it is in "Le Brasier" :

"Et voici le spectacle

Et pour toujours je suis assis dans un fauteuil"

And so, also in retrospect, we see the meaning of the question which the poet puts in lines three to five, for if he desires to limit his experience of the world through his immobility, then he is logical in trying to reduce his purely sensual experience of the world to the advantage of the imaginative experience of it. In this light the following images which describe his senses are relatively easy to understand, although nonetheless surprising for this :

"Monstre de mon ouïe tu rugis et tu pleures
 Le tonnerre te sert de chevelure
 Et tes griffes répètent le chant des oiseaux"

The poet's hearing is monstrous because it gets in the way of his appreciation of the sounds of his imagination, and probably also because it gets in the way of the sounds of his own poetry and the comparison is unfavourable to them ; what poet can hope to roar like thunder or sing like the birds? Hence the wounding power of the latter, expressed through "griffes", the magnificent surrealist vision of the former, in which the poet is clearly pointing his own way out of the dilemma he describes. There can be no doubt that these images by their total unexpectedness, by their complete strangeness strike the reader's sensibility so that he finds the vision which they create inescapable. In other words, the poet's imagination has created an image which is as natural in its own world as is thunder or birdsong in the normal world of our experience, and so the poet by renouncing any attempt at imitating the sonorous effects of thunder and by turning to his imagination offers us a new experience.

What, then, do we make of the next line? :

"Le toucher monstrueux m'a pénétré m'empoisonne"

Is the poet not saying here that he cannot escape the sense of touching something as he can block his ears? So the knowledge of the external world which is usually brought to us by our physical contact with it becomes a poison which contaminates the imagination.

Even the eyes cannot escape, for by closing them one does not cease to see, but rather obtains a release from the real world that is more intensely visible :

"Mes yeux nagent loin de moi"

Et les astres intacts sont mes maîtres sans épreuve"

The direct and obvious statement of this must be avoided however, the image must still surprise the reader if the identity of form and content is to be maintained, and it seems fair to us to say that this is the case with this image with its echo of "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé" :

"Voix lactée ô soeur lumineuse

Des blancs ruisseaux de Chanaan

Et des corps blancs des amoureuses

Nageurs morts suivrons-nous d'ahan

Ton cours vers d'autres nébuleuses" (I)

The use of the word "nagent" seems to bring out the similarity of shape between eyes and fish which adds to the strangeness of the image, as the fish also are out of their element.

We should not fail to note the significance of the use of the word "astres" in the next line, for its value is to contrast with "étoiles" in the previous sections so that there should be no ambiguity about the identity of the stars here ; they are real - hence the description of them as "intacts" - untouched, that is, by the stain of symbolic value. Moreover they are untouched by the senses and hence superior to;the poet. This line then would seem to be an admission of the limitations of the imagination, as the perceptions of imaginative experience work through the medium of the senses even when turned away from the external world. (i.e. one "sees" things with ones eyes closed etc.)

"Et les astres intacts sont mes maîtres sans épreuve

La bête des fumées à la tête fleurie

Et le monstre le plus beau

Ayant la saveur du laurier se désole"

Resulting from this is the sadness of the poetic sense which is the "monstre le plus beau". Might one not also legitimately see in the "astres intacts" the words themselves, the medium of the poet which he can never make as pure as paint or sound the media of his fellow artists? If the "étoiles" of the preceding sections were not only symbols but examples of symbolic functions in poetry also, are the "astres intacts" not the persistent level of the linguistic element of poetry as well as the persistent level of vision which is present in the imagination even if the eyes are closed? This seems to us to be the most logical interpretation of this passage in view of the poet's initial desire to reduce his sensual experience of the world as he could reduce the mobility of his body to replace it by the mobility of his spirit, and also in view of the sadness of the "bête des fumées à la tête fleurie", a magnificently surreal image of the poetic sense which is here closely identified with the imagination. (I)

The success or failure of this section turns upon the power of the imagery to persuade the reader that the imagination is indeed the fertile source of creativity that the poet is claiming it to be. So in this section, in radical contrast to the preceding one, the poet has made his imagery as violent as possible. Why else should he introduce the qualification of "du dimanche" in the first line, other than through a desire to shock by its proximity

(I) cf. Breunig's "Apollinaire's Les Fiançailles" pp. 21-22. It seems to us that Breunig's conclusions do not here follow from what he is saying.

to the praise of laziness, for there is no other reference to religion in the section? The totally disconnected points of comparison which are offered for the first of the poet's senses, are surely there primarily to be a source of surprise. The paradox which introduces the strangest image -

"Il vit décapité"

must surely destroy any lingering comparisons with reality. And so to the final images which have completely transcended reality and which merit the qualification of surreal. The ultimate contradiction which assails the reader is the note of sadness and the admission of partial defeat on which the section ends.

In its turn this sadness is contradicted by the beginning of the next section as the poet takes the only step left open to him in his desire to surpass reality. -

"A la fin les mensonges ne me font plus peur"

He will lie, he will oppose his statements of the nature of things to our perceptions and he gives a superb example in the following line :

"C'est la lune qui cuit comme un oeuf sur le plat" (1)

This line which he has taken from the poem referred to earlier "Les villes sont pleines" where it is placed in a context which severely limits it -

"Les meurt-de-faim les sans-le-sou voyaient la lune

Etalée dans le ciel comme un oeuf sur le plat" (2)

(1) Our interpretation is completely opposed to that of Margaret Davies (Apollinaire p. 155) which seems to us to be based on a simple misunderstanding of the French.

(2) O.P., p. 563

- is not intended as a metaphor in the normal conception of the word, nor is it meant to communicate to us some truth, Platonic or otherwise, which lies behind the phenomena moon and fried egg as we may perceive them. On the contrary, it brings together these two things so that we may be aware that they are totally different while the poet is comparing them, thus demonstrating the power of the poet, the power of his medium, language. (It is surely on the verbal level that we can accept this rapprochement, as a visual comparison will really bring out the differences where language identifies the two things, binding them by the power of the verb.) So the image becomes an example of an alternative world, and the degree to which it can surprise us will be the measure of its viability. Thus if the imagination has its limitations, the poet can supersede them by recourse to language which will allow him to juxtapose the essentially disparate. The consequences of such a step are clear - the poet may then attempt to evoke surprise as a value in itself, knowing that the reader's reaction will then be akin to the child's sense of wonder when faced with the world and thus attempt the restoration of man's lost innocence ; or the poet may try to use the violence of his technique in the simultaneously constructive and destructive fashion which we have noted with regard to previous images of violence in Apollinaire, i.e. both destroying the old world, that of the reader's perceptions, and substituting for it the new, that of the poet's imagination, the most probable result of this being the stimulation of a comparison between the two, which further underlines the autonomy of the world of the imagination.

The application of these ideas to the image in question allows us to say that the role of such an image is not to reveal the mystic

link between the moon and a fried egg, but rather to make us see that the difference between them lies in ourselves so that only in abnormal circumstances can we identify the two phenomena as the starving beggars do in "Les villes sont pleines". But our imagination may make this leap and we may choose the experience of the alternative worlds of the imagination in preference to that of our learned responses, which leads us to one of the fundamental principles of surrealism as it was to develop in the hands of Apollinaire's successors.

This, then, is the new poetry which Apollinaire was creating, and if we are not overwhelmed by its audacity and its fundamental break with tradition, then it is to us that the poet is apologising in the fifth section of the poem, and it is we whom he will describe as -

"Vous dont la bouche est faite à l'image de celle de Dieu

Bouche qui est l'ordre même" (I)

- in "La Jolie Rousse", which many see as his final testament.

The philosophical position of the poet is logically unassailable, for if we assume that God is dead then the keystone of universal order is removed, and so the creations of the imagination are on the same plane as the perceivable universe ; and if we do not assume the absence of God then we may see the creations of the imagination as inferior but do not necessarily reject them and so need not be antagonistic to the poet, as he indicates in "La Jolie Rousse" :

"Nous ne sommes pas vos ennemis"

The ambiguity of the poet's attitude towards religion is as implicit

then in this poem as it is explicit in "Zone".

This development should have made quite clear the capital importance of this section of the poem. Following on from line two we find that the poet has once again made a leap which completely overtakes all logical connection -

"Ce collier de gouttes d'eau va parer la noyée"

- and we are now worlds away from the preceding line. Who is the drowned woman and why is she being offered the cruelly ironic decoration? The questions of course find no answer but that does not mean that the image has no function other than that of surprising the reader. The necklace of drops of water, the kind of thing we may see on a spider's web after a shower, is something ephemeral and beautiful. It is the kind of perfection which each moment is in itself although doomed to disappear, it is also the symbol of the imagery of the poem itself which is sequential as one moment succeeds the previous one. This necklace is being offered to the dead woman, who is of course not real but is rather the poet's old loves - his old inspiration and hence his old poetry. Thus the grandiose image of the drowned woman (with its Shakespearian overtones of Ophelia) is superseded by the necklace of water-drops, beautiful, ephemeral and commonplace instead of a necklace of rare and precious stones ; for if the necklace is placed upon the dead woman then it is something that outlasts her - and by the link of water, destroyed her.

Even without these depths, which may be disputed, the image, in following the statement about lies, is also to be seen as an example of poetic truth rather than an empiric truth, and therefore, as a creation of the imagination, this offering of the necklace, which has the three essential qualities of beauty,

banality and ephemerality, to the dead woman, acquires this dimension of ritual in which the past is offered the tribute of the present ; but the cruel irony is inescapable, and so the present is seen as superior to the past.

"Voici mon bouquet de fleurs de la Passion

Qui offrent tendrement deux couronnes d'épines"

The same idea of a gift which brings pain is present here in this image which also re-introduces the idea of martyrdom present in section two. The double meaning of "Passion" is clear and the image is constructed so as to have a sting in the tail which is destined to take us by surprise. Until the words "deux couronnes d'épines" the image seems to have overtones much more erotic than religious. In expressing this image as an offer the poet is saying - here are the beauties which I have made out of martyrdom (that of either sacred or profane love); they offer crowns of thorns. The possibilities of interpretation are multiple, but the important thing to remember here is that the statement is a lie i.e. a poetic or imaginative truth and as such is valid only within the poetic universe, so ^{that} we must see this statement as meaning martyrdom continues as long as the imagination seeks it.

The next line continues the imagery of water, but makes it more immediate to the poet's own person ; the rain which fell a short time ago is inescapably linked in our minds with the necklace which adorns the drowned woman and so the same relationship of past to present pervades the lines which directly concern the poet. His past is with him - the past of bad poetry in a worn out style, but he is working towards something new, his own salvation, which he expresses with his own humorous note in the next line :

"Des anges diligents travaillent pour moi à la maison"

Another lie which is a truth, for if we understand this statement in the light of the poet's remarks about the irrelevance of physical mobility to the flight of the imagination then we may say that the angels are literally figments of the poet's imagination which do their work whether or not he is physically absent - yet we cannot take such a statement literally, so it is a lie. To describe the poet's exploitation of paradox as systematic, however, would be to underestimate his technique ; for by a constant variation of tone the poet prevents the reader from accepting simply that the section is merely paradox. Each image comes as a surprise, and the humour of this particular line is what catches us unawares.

The next two lines create a very strange impression :

"La lune et la tristesse disparaîtront pendant

Toute la sainte journée"

The image of the moon returns associated with sadness as it was in the preceding section. But by ending the line at "pendant" the poet surprises us with the next line for we expect a different period to be the time of the moon's invisibility, although the day is logical enough. Thus the daytime is the time of the sun, the time of the liberated imagination, and the time of happiness. Why should night eclipse this new aesthetic? The implication is undoubtedly that the moon and sadness will re-appear at night. We are given no answer ; the question is left hanging in mid-air like the second of these two lines. The night may be metaphoric, it may be real, it is most probably an acceptance of the fact that the imagination must come down to earth, such as we find in the preceding section. The colloquial overtone of the second line echoes the humour as well as the idea of salvation present in the image of the diligent angels.

The next line begins by picking up the last :

"Toute la sainte journée j'ai marché en chantant"

This we know was Apollinaire's method, or one of his methods, of composing his poems and here it carries with it this idea of composition thanks to the preceding image which associates the day with the period of creativity. The section closes on an ambiguous image which may be seen as the poet describing humourously the reaction of someone who has seen him walking past singing to himself, and suddenly we see ourselves as that woman, because we have watched the poet in the process of composing the poem as we have followed the poem's contradictions and conflicts. There is, however, a note of sadness which arises from our being given the viewpoint of the woman and so seeing the poet retreating into the distance and surely the reason for the presence of the woman in the poem is to remind the reader that he, like her, is an outsider in this matter. Can the poet be saying that his imagination is again carrying him beyond our reach, or more likely, that because the imagination cannot work unhindered he is slipping away from us - an interpretation which is supported by the phrasing which isolates the words "M'éloigner en chantant". The poet goes off composing his poetry and we are left behind. So the section ends, but the poem continues. And once again we are confronted by a contradiction within the section itself for as it began on a note of affirmation of courage and power, it ends on a note, not of defeat, but of compromise ; Apollinaire is aware that in this new style he may not always take the reader with him. The poet still lacks the confidence which he displays in "Les Collines" :

"Je dis ce qu'est au vrai la vie

Seul je pouvais chanter ainsi" (I)

Nevertheless he begins the next section simply by throwing out the new poetry and leaving it to stand or fall by itself, so he could not have been entirely without confidence in it. When we pass from section seven to section eight, there is a measure of physical continuity which derives from the poet's motion - at the end of one section he walks off down the street, at the beginning of the next he turns a corner ; but what he sees on turning the corner makes a complete break. Some sailors appear, who have not hitherto been present in the poem and who are not mentioned again although the décor of this section is that of a port.

"Au tournant d'une rue je vis des matelots

Qui dansaient le cou nu au son d'un accordéon"

There is nothing essentially surprising in the appearance of the sailors themselves, they are for the reader simply what the poet is seeing as he walks along. Yet the fact that the walk continues at all after the sadness of the end of the last section is surprising and there is, of course, a great contrast in tone in the natural gaiety of this image of the dancing sailors, a contrast which is made sharper for its sudden appearance. The reader feels this image to be a detail which the poet has observed and which he has incorporated into the poem ; if its meaning is not entirely clear it is at least obvious that it is there to contrast poignantly with the end of the preceding section. It is external, compared with the subjective imagery of the lines which precede it and also those which follow it :

"J'ai tout donné au soleil

Tout sauf mon ombre"

Again the poet is clearly exploiting a rupture in the tone of the poem to surprise the reader. The sun is inevitably

associated with the line "Il vit décapité sa tête est le soleil" from the sixth section, and so the reader interprets this line as meaning that the poet has given everything to his desire to create except his shadow. A curious reservation! If the poet has given his body how can his shadow remain? By the juxtaposing of these four lines of the first verse, the poet manages to suggest, in spite of the lack of all logical connection, that the image of the sailors dancing is something to do with his shadow. Can it then be a remembered scene which the poet has introduced to begin this section? We know from a study such as that of Madame Durré (1) that for Apollinaire the image of the shadow stood for his past as the image of light stood for his future. Although this is clear from a study of his poetry as a whole in which one feels the accumulation of striking images such as this -

"Ténébreuse épouse que j'aime"

- from "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé" in which the woman is made inescapably into a figure from the poet's past by the use of the word "ténébreuse"; this is not immediately clear in the context of this image and this poem. Nevertheless through the connection of the two images which is brought about by their juxtaposition, the idea that the poet is referring to his past dawns upon the reader. (The change of tense from past definite to the perfect undoubtedly helps here.) From the unusual context arises the idea that the image of the sailors dancing is a memory, and one which has not been offered to the fire. The image does not yield its secret ; it is not meant to. Yet in the light of factors external to the poem there can be no doubt that the poet in this image of the sailors sees himself as

(1) cf. Durré, t.3, pp. 191 et seq.

he was as a child.

Consider this quotation from Adéma's biography :

"Une photographie des deux frères, que je possède, en porte également témoignage. Elle a été exécutée par Roberto Peli, Via Farina, no. 10 à Bologne. Guillaume a de longs cheveux lui tombant sur les épaules et porte déjà le costume marin qu'affect-
ionnait sa mère et dont elle vêtira longtemps ses deux fils." (1)
Adéma is discussing the fact that Apollinaire first came to France at the age of three and then returned to Italy, so that clearly there are two primary associations here for Apollinaire ; firstly the arrival in France and secondly his family background - both linked with the idea of the sailor's costume. Consider also this image from "Le Voyageur" :

"Deux matelots qui ne s'étaient jamais quittés

Deux matelots qui ne s'étaient jamais parlé" (2)

Was this not for Apollinaire an image of himself and his younger brother Albert? This becomes even more obvious in a later image from the same poem :

"Deux matelots qui ne s'étaient jamais ~~quittés~~

L'aîné portait au cou une chaîne de fer

Le plus jeune mettait ses cheveux blonds en tresse" (3)

Photographs of Apollinaire and his brother at an early age show both with abundant long hair!

So in this image of the dancing sailors Apollinaire was putting his past and its secrets - his illegitimate birth, the

(1) cf. Adéma. (68), p. 23

(2) O.P., p. 79

(3) O.P., p. 80

identity of his father, his mother's scandalous career of which he was ashamed - perhaps all this is compressed into this tantalising image - for the poet. But it is not revealed to the reader. As we have said, however, the image appears as a secret memory, the one thing that Apollinaire holds back from the creative fire, and his impulse to tell of his life and experiences and yet still hold back the key which reveals the intimate biographical details is a well observed element of his poetry. The effect of the image then, is to create both surprise and mystery. The first line of the next verse details certain elements of the port scene and ends on a note of humorous ridicule :

"Les dragues les ballots les sirènes mi-mortes"

The first two elements are real, the sirens mythical (or real ships' sirens emitting a dying wail), so there is already a contrast before the unexpected adjective which destroys the romantic associations of the lure of ships, the voyages to distant lands. True the poet describes the sirens as only half-dead, and so an element of the temptation persists, but it carries no conviction - one flaw in the lure is enough to annul its effectiveness and so the image of the next line does not carry the reader with it on an imaginary voyage -

"A l'horizon brumeux s'enfonçaient les trois-mâts"

- but rather represents the impossible voyage, the one which the poet will not make because he is too aware of the problems. So for him there is no fair wind to carry him away to foreign lands.-

"Les vents ont expiré couronnés d'anémones"

- the heavy scent of the flowers is more than they can bear ; the elements of the real world are cancelling one another out and so the poet turns to his imagination -

"O Vierge signe pur du troisième mois"

Virgo is the third of the signs of the Zodiac relating to the summer and was also the sign governing Apollinaire's birth ; so that here the poet is declaring that this was his destiny to be tempted by the sirens but to see through them and to prefer the purity which is that of his governing star.

In this stanza we have moved from the dock scene to the scented delicateness of the last two lines (which Apollinaire borrowed from his early poem "Le Printemps" and which this time he has integrated without intending the reader to notice anything except the change in tone). The immobility of the sixth section is allied now to purity which as we shall see is the purity of the martyr.

"Templiers flamboyants je brûle parmi vous"

Thus the final section begins on the martyr's pyre and in it the poet will unite all the themes of the poem. This first line identifies him with the Knights Templar in their martyrdom, and the poet, elevating himself to the rank of a Christian saint, claims the power of prophecy - he is now sure of his powers even if he is destroying himself to achieve them :

"Templiers flamboyants je brûle parmi vous

Prophétisons ensemble ô grand maître je suis"

We have isolated these lines because Apollinaire by abolishing the punctuation has freed the words from a set order of associations in the same way that he has freed his imagery. The original published version of the second line read :

"Prophétisons ensemble, ô grands maîtres, je suis

Le désirable feu" (I)

The elimination of the punctuation together with the change from the plural to the singular of the phrase "8 grands maîtres" has had the effect of creating a retroactive association of the "je suis" with the "8 grand maître". The poet returns to the tone of the second section of "Le Brasier", and not only identifies himself with the martyr but with the fire as well and this time he does go on to create a visionary tableau which only he can achieve through his act of self-immolation. Thus the "vous" in line three seems more to be addressed to the reader than to the grand master :

" je suis

Le désirable feu qui pour vous se dévoue"

The poet this time will reveal to us the fruits of his experience.

The next line explodes with meaning like the firework that is described in it. The repetition of the adjective "belle" lays heavy emphasis upon it :

"La girande tourne 8 belle 8 belle nuit"

The reduction of the fire to a display of fireworks is not trivialising it - the line takes us by surprise and is the very essence of ephemeral beauty that Apollinaire is proclaiming ; the statement deleted from the final section of "Les Paroles Etoiles" (I) :

"Puis j'ai reconnu que chaque moment porte en soi sa propre perfection" is here rendered perfectly in the form of an image which is much more convincing than a bare statement, and doubly so because of its unexpectedness.

We cannot fail to think of the remarkable image in "Les Collines", which has already been analysed in section two of chapter one :

(I) cf. Déc., p. 205

"Et je pèle pour mes amis

L'orange dont la saveur est

Un merveilleux feu d'artifice"

Many commentators, including M. Décaudin (I), have said that in this poem Apollinaire turns away from the search for perfection in poetry to find his material and inspiration in his everyday surroundings. This is certainly true, although it is more borne out by the imagery of his later poetry than the imagery of "Les Fiançailles" itself, but the really important point is that made by this crucial image - namely that each moment in its burning beautiful actuality is to be accepted in itself, as one accepts the ephemeral beauty of an exploding firework. The whole aesthetic structure of the poem is based upon this concept - the separating of the sections to allow each to stand on its own, joined only to the others by their proximity, just as one moment is joined to the previous one and the next one, but whole in itself also.

This freeing of the atoms of poetry, if we may be permitted the analogy, increases the possible number of combinations as was demonstrated on a simple level with the words in line two of this final section. And now the first line of the second verse enunciates the theory :

"Liens déliés par une libre flamme Ardeur"

(I) cf. Déc., p. 207, "Il n'est plus question maintenant de satisfaire à un excessif souci de perfection et à l'art poétique. La poésie est dans la vie même de l'homme, dans sa sensibilité, dans le regard qu'il jette sur le monde. Expérience capitale, dans laquelle se découvre les véritables valeurs poétiques.

The paradox of the "Liens déliés" contains the essence of the technique ; violent in itself, it violates all our normal conceptions of the functions of language and of the way in which a poem is written and understood. By undoing the bonds the poet releases the energy of the poem ; by suppressing conventional associations the poet makes possible new and surprising ones. Freedom and experience are the essence of the new poetry which the poet is offering in place of the imitation of the ordered universe.

But once again the poet's confidence seems to fail him, he is still obsessed with the idea of martyrdom, believing it necessary to destroy himself in order to achieve this overwhelming experience of liberty :

"

Ardeur

Que mon souffle éteindra O Morts à quarantaine

Je mire de ma mort la gloire et le malheur

Comme si je visais l'oiseau de la quintaine"

The interpretations of these lines are many, some even going so far as to profess to see in the end of the second line a prophetic reference to the poet's death at almost forty years of age! Is, in that case, the breath referred to in the first part of the line the poet's last, and therefore the sense of the line that Apollinaire is the last of those who will be able to reveal the new, the future to us? We cannot ignore this possibility. On the other hand the line could be interpreted as meaning that the poet will extinguish the flame, i.e. will make it no longer necessary to die in order to achieve this transcendental experience, and the "Morts à quarantaine" could be those who died forty together like the martyrs of Sebastopol to whom he refers in "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé".

Whatever interpretation we place upon this line it retains something of the esoteric quality of oracular pronouncement, as indeed it is meant to do.

The next two lines are heavy with erotic overtones which themselves are shot through with violence. If the second line is more explicitly sexual than the first then at least in retrospect we cannot escape the double meaning of "mort" in the former. The image is admirable, the brevity and absolute self-sufficiency of orgasm, with the presence of real death and the violence of the medieval jousting game, is the ideal image of the poetic experience which Apollinaire is offering. (I)

The last verse returns us to a décor similar to that of the opening section but transformed totally by all that the poet and ourselves have experienced :

"Incertitude oiseau feint peint quand vous tombez

Le soleil et l'amour dansaient dans le village"

The image of the "oiseau de la quintaine" is continued ; but it is not a real bird and this is seen when the target is hit and it falls. By associating it with his hesitations Apollinaire shows that it is difficult to avoid uncertainty but he is shown to be right on achieving his goal - for the bird is seen to be painted when it falls. This calls to mind the image of "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé" -

"Malheur dieu pâle aux yeux d'ivoire

+ + +

Malheur dieu qu'il ne faut pas croire" (2)

(I) The sexual meaning of the image is made clear in Déc., p.208

(2) O.P., p. 54

- in which temptation is also very powerfully expressed and rejected ultimately. Rid of temptation to draw back from this new and demanding creative role, the poet is now free to reveal the identity of the couple whose betrothal is being celebrated :

"Le soleil et l'amour dansaient dans le village"

Love, which has been the poet's sole support throughout the trials of the poem is now allied to the sun, the freed imagination, and the result is :

"Et tes enfants galants bien ou mal habillés

Ont bâti ce bûcher le nid de mon courage"

The "tes" undoubtedly refers to the poet, and his children are the parts of this poem which, polished or roughly finished, go to make up the whole poem, the poet's testimony of his new powers, his ordeal by fire.

There is in the second line of this last verse a note of naïve happiness which lends a kind of innocence to this crucial image which seems to surpass all the struggles which the poet has undertaken in order to achieve this union upon which his new poetry is founded. But we should not forget that it is only a betrothal which is being celebrated and not a wedding - the poet himself was not sure enough of his own strength to announce the indissoluble union of his two driving forces, the sun and love.

After this lengthy analysis of "Les Fiançailles", in which we have attempted to bring out the meaning of the poem so as to make absolutely clear the role and importance of the images of violence which are present in the poem, it is obvious that this poem more than any other that has been considered to date was for Apollinaire the one in which he forged a new poetic technique, the one in which he attempted to bring about his own ~~spiritual~~ rebirth

by destroying his old self. Strangely the image of the Phoenix is absent from the poem for it is the image which would seem most suited to the role which Apollinaire had set himself in his task; perhaps it is a measure of how difficult this task was for him that the image of the Phoenix does not appear - Apollinaire was not certain that he was to survive as a poet this self-inflicted fire. Thus, although there is a hint that Apollinaire sees himself as the Phoenix in the final line, the emphasis on courage reveals his uncertainty about the rebirth that should follow.

We now turn to one of the most difficult texts which Apollinaire ever wrote but one which is also absolutely essential to an understanding of the progress of his poetry during these crucial years ; that is to say "Onirocritique" (I). Any analysis of this prose poem must begin with the title which means the critique of dreams. As we have already seen in this section Apollinaire was greatly concerned at this time with the status of the poet as a creator, as a rival to God ; and there could be no more natural consideration for him than that of dreams, for when a man is dreaming he creates an entire universe in which the laws of his waking existence have no part. To dream is to recreate the world in one's own image. Understandably then, we find Apollinaire attempting to analyse this process ; or so it seems. In fact this poem is not an account of a dream at all, it is probably not even a deliberately induced hallucination.

What Apollinaire is attempting to do here is to act as though he were dreaming and to create a universe which bears no relation to the one we know. So if there is here a kind of "dérèglement des

sens", it remains at the linguistic level ; that is to say that the poet when he says - "les vallons où les pommiers chantaient" did not really hear, or dream he heard, or think he heard apple trees singing, but rather chose to write this as something that is outwith the normal experience of any man and so place himself on the level of creator of a universe which has its own laws. May we not say then, that the poem rather than being a dream, is a parallel to a dream, and therefore a critique or analysis of dreams to the extent that it is a commentary upon them by being the same action taken in full consciousness? This is what we intend to show in the following pages, and also that the poet depends upon techniques of violence for the ability to create his unreal universe.

Let us consider the opening of the poem :

"Les charbons du ciel étaient si proches que je craignais leur ardeur. Ils étaient sur le point de me brûler".

In the very first words we come upon a statement which runs counter to our normal perceptions of reality - "Les charbons du ciel"; but it does more than that : it destroys all possible ideas of scale ; how big is a being to whom the stars are like lumps of coal? The poet has grown to fill the space between earth and sky ; or has the sky fallen? Whichever image the phrase evokes it is clear that we are no longer in the world as we know it. In this case, although the image comes as a surprise to us we cannot really speak of violence ; rather the poem begins as does a dream, by surrounding us with the abnormal in such a way that it seems normal. The real shocks and surprise come later.

Thus the introduction of the next sentence expresses some kind of opposition to the opening -

"Mais j'avais la conscience des éternités différentes de l'homme et de la femme."

- where no logical opposition exists. The timelessness of the dream is linked to the eternal masculine/feminine dichotomy of the universe. Already the reader has no anchor left to attach him to reality. By suppressing all logic, as we know it, and by transforming normal objects into something different while allowing them to retain enough of their original identity to be recognisable as what they are, the poet has created the dream atmosphere. This conflict between knowing what a thing is and what we observe it to be in a dream is the essential detail of the alternative universe, i.e. we may while dreaming see an animal (for example) and yet know that that animal is in fact a door, and treat it like a door ; thus we are combining two different awarenesses of the same object which cannot possibly be combined when we are awake. This is what Apollinaire does in the first words of the poem. We know that "Les charbons du ciel" are stars but by using the word "charbons" Apollinaire forces us to accept the co-existence of these two contradictory realities, thus creating a dream through the use of language.

In the same way he uses such phrases as "des grappes de lunes", so that we may speak of a violation of reality, as the linguistic apprehension which we have of such images cannot be reconciled with observable reality as we know it. But this is, of course, not the only way in which the poet maintains the dream-universe. He also makes free use of metamorphosis which by its very nature is outside our knowledge of the properties of an object - "Arrivé au bord d'une fleuve je le pris à deux mains et le brandis. Cette épée me désaltéra!" We think it mistaken to try

to see in this kind of image the type of metaphor which is meant to reveal something in the nature of a hidden reality between the two terms. The metamorphosis of one object into another is meant to surprise the reader and it does this by bringing together two completely unrelated objects. The possible element of similarity between these two objects, river and sword, i.e. they are both silvery, is pushed into the background by the attribution of the qualities of one to the other and vice-versa ; it is the river which is brandished and the sword which slakes the poet's thirst.

Two more important elements of the dream atmosphere which we encounter in the poem are the multiplication of self and the spectacle of unreal violence. Both these aspects are joined in the following image :

"Centuplé, je nageais vers un archipel. Cent matelots m'accueillirent et m'ayant mené dans un palais, ils m'y tuèrent quatre-vingt-dix-neuf fois." Because the personality of the narrator is only present in the grammatical context, i.e. the person of the verbs, the reader has no image to multiply by a hundred other than his own, but this is not possible to the imagination of a waking person. Clearly also the destruction of ninety-nine of the narrator's selves is intended to exploit the inability of the conscious person to assimilate the dream combination of emotions of danger and security ; of facing destruction and knowing oneself to be safe.

It seems to us that it is by now clearly established that the poet is deliberately attempting to keep his dream world free from the reader's grasp ; that he is constantly springing upon the reader an image which eludes all assimilation to normal experience and so forces the reader outside the boundaries of his

normal experience, so that all knowledge he has of the world of the poem springs from the poem itself. Every line of this text provides us with examples which we could quote, but what we wish to do here is to establish the poet's methods rather than to analyse in detail this poem which would lead us into the province of the psychologist. This done, there is an obvious parallel to be drawn between the poet's technique in "Les Fiançailles" and his technique in this poem. That parallel lies in the use of images which surprise the reader and in so doing destroy the world as he knows it in order to create the unreal world of the poem.

The significant difference between the two poems lies in the fact that in "Onirocritique" the poet allows no contact at all with either reality or with statement, so that the poem must stand or fall entirely upon the success of its imagery, whereas in "Les Fiançailles" although the images are frequently called upon to operate in their own world they are meant to communicate meaning of some kind to the reader. For example, the key images of the final section of the poem -

"Et la girande tourne ô belle ô belle nuit

Liens déliés par une libre flamme Ardeur

Que mon souffle éteindra O Morts à quarantaine

Je mire de ma mort la gloire et le malheur

Comme si je visais l'oiseau de la quintaine" (I)

- these images although freed from reality, whether visual, functional or even the reality of syntax and hence outwith the normal realm of the reader's experience are there to convey to the reader

the nature of the poetic experience which the poet is undergoing as he writes "Les Fiançailles".

On the other hand the imagery of "Onirocritique", although there are certain thematic expressions which run through the poem such as -

"Mais, j'avais la conscience des éternités différentes de l'homme et de la femme"

- which might seem to lend a dimension of meaning to the text, the imagery is in fact, as we have said, a recreation of dream and therefore carries no level of meaning that is discernible to anyone other than a psychiatrist. The imagery of "Onirocritique" is, then, an entirely closed experience, whereas the imagery of "Les Fiançailles" is an open one. That is to say that in "Les Fiançailles" the images remain a medium, a greatly changed and liberated medium, but still a vehicle of communication although the communication really depends upon the liberty of the image. Thus the road which the poet explores in "Onirocritique" is largely a dead end, because it carries to its ultimate conclusion the freeing of the image, and leaves only the dimension of surprise. In creating the pristine world of the dream Apollinaire is fulfilling his boast - "J'émervaille", but he does not seem to have considered that the poet should be able to adopt the role of God to the extent that each of his creations should become an entirely new and unrelated universe. Thus "Les Fiançailles" represents in some ways a step back from the position of "Onirocritique" ; the poet now feeling that although each poem, each work, represents its own world, the experience which it gives us must in some way be related to our own lives. This is clearly seen in the later poems which he composed as we shall see in the following sections.

It must surely now be obvious that the progress accomplished by Apollinaire from "La Chanson" to the poems of 1907/8 entails a fully conscious development of what we call the techniques of violence. Where the rhythm and melody of the "Chanson" to some extent smooth the transition from one image or section to the next, the composition of the poems discussed in this chapter dispenses with these and indeed the impact of the poems depends upon the harshness and the unexpectedness of the juxtapositions. It is also very important to note that whereas love and various women do come into these poems in certain ways, one cannot compare these poems to any of Apollinaire's earlier love poetry ; their intentions and aspirations are quite different. So that we note that, as with the composition of "La Chanson", when Apollinaire needed to find a greater depth of expression, when his poetic range was being extended, he turned in a corresponding degree to the techniques of shock, of juxtaposition, rather than logical development, to violence - in other words to what was most original in himself.

CHAPTER TWO : SECTION FIVE

OTHER POEMS

In this section we shall deal with the remaining important poems in "Alcools" with the exception of "Zone" for reasons which we shall set out in section six of this chapter. This means that we shall be dealing with poems whose composition was spread out over a period of three years which marked Apollinaire's career as a writer and brought him into the public eye, not only in the way in which he would have desired but also as the alien accused of stealing the Mona Lisa from the Louvre. During this period also Apollinaire intrigued the readers of "Les Marges" by writing a column under the name of Louise Lalanne from January 1909 to January 1910. This and other amusements which he and his companions allowed themselves acquired for him the reputation of a member of a group primarily concerned with "mystification". Had he allowed this reputation to pass uncontested it might have done even more harm than it actually did. Apollinaire, never having been anything but a serious writer where his poetry was concerned, clearly had no desire to see his hard won new poetry dismissed in this fashion simply because it was not "le plus immédiatement accessible".

The extent to which Apollinaire established himself as a writer in this period may be seen from a list of his publications up to the year 1913. Beginning in 1909 he published "L'Enchanteur pourrissant", "L'Hérésiarque et Cie.", "Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée", "Les Peintres Cubistes" and "Alcools". Also during this period he helped to found and edit "Les Soirées de Paris", as well as writing his regular "La Vie anecdotique" for the "Mercure de France". To add to his notoriety he was known publicly

as the champion of the Cubists, even before the publication of his book, which in any case he intended to call "Méditations Esthétiques" as Marcel Adéma has shown.(1) But this public association with the Cubists did nothing for Apollinaire's reputation as a serious poet although he never abandoned his friends and was always ready to come to their aid. Many people have subsequently accused Apollinaire of jumping on the Cubist bandwagon and of purveying the ideas of men whose paintings he was incapable of understanding. It should be remembered that Apollinaire won himself far more enemies than friends by his defence of the Cubists and that he suffered many things which would probably never have happened to him had he not been known as their friend. Also, as early as 1907, he was insisting that there could be no relation between poetry and painting, so far was he from trying to climb to fame on the backs of his painter friends :

"Il n'y a pas de rapport de la littérature à la peinture, et je me suis efforcé de n'établir à cet égard aucune confusion." (2)

If we have gone to the trouble to state these things it is because we wish to show that Apollinaire was during this period, as in any other, writing poetry which was fundamentally his own, and which, although difficult, was not intended as either a joke or a literary imitation of cubism, both of which he has been accused of.

The poems which we shall be dealing with are "Cortège", "Poème lu au mariage d'André Salmon", "Vendémiaire", "Le Voyageur" and "Cours de Chasse". We shall be considering these poems as

(1) cf. Adéma (68), p. 214

(2) Chroniques d'Art, O.C., p. 84

continuing the techniques developed in "Les Fiançailles". We begin by examining "Cortège". (I)

"Oiseau tranquille au vol inverse oiseau
 Qui nidifie en l'air
 A la limite où notre sol brille déjà
 Baisse ta deuxième paupière la terre t'éblouit
 Quand tu lèves la tête"

The poem begins with an image which surpasses the limits of our visual imagination. If we are able to go as far as seeing a bird flying upside down we cannot follow the poet in the other details which he adds. It is almost certain that this is also true of Apollinaire's own visual imagination and therefore what he is describing to us here is a non-visual image entirely dependent upon language for its existence. Madame Durrty has spoken of an "inspiration verbale" and compared it to similar images called for by André Breton (2). But she also says, and we would agree with her, that if the image eludes us visually it does not entirely escape our imagination. This image seems to communicate directly with our subconscious mind. We seem to grasp the image yet we cannot visualise it. Here Apollinaire has achieved an image which is created by the words themselves ; he has endowed his language with a creative power which overcomes the barriers of rational comprehension ; he has achieved the perfect shock image.

The image thus implanted in the reader's mind, the poet changes rapidly the subject and uses the first person :

"Et moi aussi de près je suis sombre et terne"

(1) O.P., p. 74

(2) cf Durrty, T.3, pp. I77-I78

Not only the introduction of the "moi" but also the use of the word "aussi" come as a surprise to the reader. The poet is identifying himself with the bird, and as a man he is only something which gets in the way of the light :

"Une brume qui vient d'obscurcir les lanternes
 Une main qui tout à coup se pose devant les yeux
 Une voûte entre vous et toutes les lumières"

But he will not remain as a block in the way of the light ; he himself will become a source of light among the shadows :

"Et je m'éloignerai m'illuminant au milieu d'ombres
 Et d'alignements d'yeux des astres bien-aimés"

Once again the poet announces the theme of transformation of self. Through the new poetry he is becoming a giver of light to men. Thus we understand the poet to be saying that from close up, he looks just like any other man, but as a poet he launches himself through the imagination to the stars like a comet giving off a brilliant light.

The next verse is a repetition of the first with certain very significant changes which are very necessary to maintain the power of the image to surprise us. The first change in the wording is delayed as long as possible in order to increase our surprise ; in the third line the poet has changed the grammatical order so that the change in the subject is the last thing we notice in the line. And that change of subject assimilates the poet's memory to the earth ; but might we not ask whether the poet is not here using the word "mémoire" to mean that which is remembered rather than the faculty of memory?

We recall the images of the poems in the previous section in which the poet identified himself with the sun and moon. In addition

there is the line in the second verse beginning "Je m'éloignerai..." which suggests that the poet is leaving the earth behind and this is taken up again by the following lines of this stanza :

"Baisse ta deuxième paupière

Ni à cause du soleil ni à cause de la terre

Mais pour ce feu oblong dont l'intensité ira s'augmentant

Au point qu'il deviendra un jour l'unique lumière"

These lines assimilate the essence of the first two stanzas, so that now the bird is dazzled by neither the sun nor the reflecting earth, but by the luminous comet which is growing brighter and brighter and which is the poet, or perhaps, in keeping with the imagery of "Les Fiançailles", the poet's liberated imagination. The last line shows that the poet is no longer retained by fear, for he claims that the only light will eventually be himself, i.e. that he alone will be able to reveal things as they really are.

The details of the imagery of these lines border on the absurd - the idea of a bird nesting in the air and even the line "Baisse ta deuxième paupière" although there may well be some ornithological foundation for this. This does not, however, prevent the imagery from functioning on a serious level as we have already pointed out. This is part of the surprise, and Apollinaire was to accord it a place in his poetry in the same way as he did any other emotion :

"Nous avons vu depuis Alfred Jarry le rire s'élever des basses régions où il se tordait et fournir au poète un lyrisme tout neuf." (I)

It is also, of course, part of the strangeness of the image, which

(I) L'Esprit Nouveau, p. 14 (ed. 1948) also in O.C. t.3.

is what lends it its power. We may say, then, that the whole of these three verses forming a first part of the poem exploit the techniques of violence in different ways, and depend upon them for their success. The "surreal" image, the abrupt change of tone and of person, the integration of the humorous into the essentially serious, all these factors are deliberately exploited and not simply for the purpose of surprising the reader, but to make a poem, unique in style and original in expression.

Although there is no separation of the sections as in "Les Fiançailles", there can be no doubt that the next lines represent a completely new departure. There is a change of tone to the tone of almost light-hearted banter :

"Un jour

Un jour je m'attendais moi-même

Je me disais Guillaume il est temps que tu viennes"

We might almost have been reading a new poem, so different is this section from the preceding one. In spite of their light-hearted tone, however, these lines introduce a serious theme - the quest for identity, for self-knowledge that comes with maturity. The lines which follow develop the poet's knowledge of others, his powers of divination which allow him to know their nature and their future :

"Je les connais par les cinq sens et quelques autres

Il me suffit de voir leurs pieds pour pouvoir refaire ces

/gens à milliers

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

La monnaie des aveugles les mains de muets"

The effect of this variation is to prevent the idea arising that the poet is working towards any kind of a climax. The random choice

of detail, the variation of the emotive values of the details combine to prevent the building up of any suspense, so that then the claim which ends the list appears even more extravagant :

"Il me suffit de tous ceux-là pour me croire le droit
De ressusciter les autres"

This is the power of the poet! He can recreate reality from the tiniest and most banal details. He can ressuscitate others, that is to say give to what is past and therefore a new life in his poetry.

This statement is followed by yet another surprise and one which reveals an essential part of Apollinaire's nature :

"Un jour je m'attendais moi-même
Je me disais Guillaume il est temps que tu viennes
Et d'un lyrique pas s'avançaient ceux que j'aime"

By postponing the words "ceux que j'aime" to the last possible moment the poet allows the expectation to develop that it is his real self which he is about to introduce at this point, and therefore identifies those he loves with his real nature. The extent to which this was true of Apollinaire's character may be seen from this passage from Marcel Adéma's excellent biography :

"Il est de toutes les réunions, de tous les comités, entre autres avec Gide, Bouhéliier, Canudo et quelques autres du "Comité d'initiatives théâtrales" qui organise à l'Odéon des lectures de pièces d'auteurs nouveaux ; (. . . .) On le voit dans toutes les expositions, dans tous les cafés littéraires, aux dîners des revues, aux conférences de ses amis, à croire qu'il a reçu des fées le don d'ubiquité. Il disparaît parfois plusieurs jours sans qu'on sache ce qu'il est devenu, puis revient, toujours joyeux compagnon, disert, brillant, dissipant par son rire les reproches, entraînant

les uns et les autres chez Picasso, à la "Closerie", partout où il peut se sentir entouré, écouté, déplaçant sa déjà corpulente personne avec une surprenante vivacité." (1)

He was clearly a gregarious person who needed to be among friends, and who identified himself with his friends.

But the poet does not leave us with that simple impression of his nature, he was far too complex a person for that. The next line contradicts this impression which, there can be no doubt, he deliberately created :

"Parmi lesquels je n'étais pas"

The line surprises the reader, contradicts the previous ones, but does not destroy their effect. Apollinaire is giving an idea of the complexity of his personality by revealing these two conflicting aspects of it as conflicting truths. He did identify himself with his friends, but he was also himself and nobody else.

Possibly, also, the poet was not among the group of his friends because he was the whole group more than any one person in it. This is an interpretation which is in harmony with the theories of the "Unanimistes", the "poètes de l'Abbaye" with whose ideas Apollinaire felt a certain sympathy at this time (2).

There now begins a movement which is much more sustained and unified in tone than the preceding lines and which introduces a totally unexpected scheme of imagery :

"Les géants couverts d'algues passaient dans leurs villes
Sous-marines où les tours seules étaient des îles
Et cette mer avec les clartés de ses profondeurs
Coulait sang de mes veines et fait battre mon coeur"

(1) cf. Adéma (68), p. 155

(2) cf. Déc., p. 128, and also Adéma (68), pp. 159-160

After all the things and people which Apollinaire has enumerated in the lines 19-40 of the poem, it would be no great surprise to meet with giants ; but he is not content to introduce human giants, they are the giants of the sea bed, although the setting is such that they take on some semblance of human form in our imagination. Then the third and fourth lines quoted above again transform the scene, firstly by a paradox -

"Et cette mer avec les clartés de ses profondeurs"

- which to us in this age of undersea exploration and photography may conjure up a picture of oblique shafts of sunlight penetrating the sea-water, but to the readers of Apollinaire's day would not even have this contact with reality ; and secondly by transforming the whole image into a metaphor of the depths of the human consciousness :

"Coulait sang de mes veines et fait battre mon coeur"

We are suddenly once more in the presence of those disquieting creatures who invaded the consciousness of the poet in "Le Brasier":

"Des acteurs inhumains claires bêtes nouvelles" (1)

- and who personify the unknown elements of the subconscious mind which as we have seen the poet is prepared to face with much greater equanimity in "Les Collines" some eight or nine years later :

"Profondeurs de la conscience

On vous explorera demain

Et qui sait quels êtres vivants

Seront tirés de ces abîmes" (2)

Already in this image from "Cortège", Apollinaire is accepting the

(1) O.P., p. 110

(2) O.P., p. 172

presence of these creatures with much less fear than in "Le Brasier"! He is prepared to learn from them the language of his poetry - a language of much greater liberty than the traditional language of verse. The next lines reveal an image of mankind which, apart from the manifest associations which it has with the ideas of the "Unanimistes" also develops the idea that in the liberations of the unconscious mind, the depths of the human personality, lies the way to understanding between men ; and since this understanding between himself and others is what the poet seeks, he speaks the language of these strange peoples :

"Puis sur terre il venait mille peuplades blanches
Dont chaque homme tenait une rose à la main
Et le langage qu'ils inventaient en chemin
Je l'appris de leur bouche et je le parle encore"

But as these peoples are parts of himself, in that they are the creatures of his imagination, the language that the poet speaks is that of a dialogue with himself ; and the clear object of any dialogue with oneself is self-knowledge. Thus, in finding out what one is, one is seeking knowledge of the future since the act of self-interrogation in contributing towards the formation of self and so the final answer is what one will be - from the point of view of the participants in the dialogue. And so the poet interweaves with the idea of knowledge through the liberation of the unconscious the idea of knowledge of the future. This is of paramount importance in our understanding of Apollinaire's poetic aims. It is clear in "Les Collines", not only in the lines already quoted -

"Profondeurs de la conscience
On vous explorera demain"

- which clearly link the two ideas, but also in many other verses in the poem such as the following :

"Voici le temps de la magie
Il s'en revient attendez-vous
A des milliards de prodiges
Qui n'ont fait naître aucune fable
Nul ne les ayant imaginés" (I)

Apollinaire's theories about the poetic imagination which invented the image towards the reality of which science struggled in the distant future (2) are here made an example of this theme. What can be brought forth in the form of images from the unconscious mind (and how close Apollinaire is here to the Freudian theories of the expressions of desires) will be images of the future since man will apply himself to the fulfilment of his desires ; and all that man creates by science which has not been foreseen by the poets is a failure on the part of the poets, for the future, for Apollinaire, is inescapably bound up with the buried parts of human nature.

We shall see how the poet develops this in the final verse of the poem, but for the moment we return to the next lines which continue to develop the image of the "cortège" which gives the poem its name :

"Le cortège passait et j'y cherchais mon corps
Tous ceux qui survenaient et n'étaient pas moi-même
Amenaient un à un les morceaux de moi-même

(I) O.P., p. 172

(2) cf. "L'Esprit Nouveau" - the poet's imagination created

Icarus thousands of years before the scientist created the aeroplane, ~~the~~ scientific equivalent.

On me bâtit peu à peu comme on élève une tour
 Les peuples s'entassaient et je parus moi-même
 Qu'ont formé tous les corps et les choses humaines"

These lines make clear the fact that Apollinaire was not among the people of the procession, because he was the sum of them, which, while perfectly in keeping with unanimist ideas was also in keeping with Apollinaire's ideas about the relationship of the writer to the universe and to his imagination as he expressed it in "Les Fiançailles" and, indeed, is expressing it here. Whether one considers these people in the procession to be Apollinaire's friends or simply figments of his imagination, they are both aspects of himself, not only because they are human, but also because they fall within the sphere of his consciousness and so may be recreated by his imagination.

So we come to the two final verses of the poem, each a quatrain of alexandrines, and in these verses the poet speaks directly of his ideas on past and future and of his relationship to them :

"Temps passés Trépassés Les dieux qui me formâtes
 Je ne vis que passant ainsi que vous passâtes
 Et détournant mes yeux de ce vide avenir
 En moi-même je vois tout le passé grandir"

Much to our surprise we find ourselves faced with a volte-face on the part of the poet. He seems to be saying that he is the sum of what has happened to him, just as much now as he will be when dead. This leaves no room at all for the role of the imagination. Rather than someone who contains the potential future, he is the sum of History, of the development of mankind!

"Rien n'est mort que ce qui n'existe pas encore

Près du passé luisant demain est incolore

Il est informe aussi près de ce qui parfait

Présente tout ensemble et l'effort et l'effet"

The poet does not even seem to want to develop the role that the imagination would play in a reconstruction of the past! This is not an ending which is meant to shock us. It is not a final twist of the argument to finish on a note of surprise. In our opinion it is an ending composed later than the rest of the poem - it certainly is not present in the known manuscript versions (1) - and one which is intended to dismiss the poem which the poet no longer felt like continuing, partly because he was no longer interested in the unanimists' ideas and possibly also, because he had already achieved a complete poem along these lines in "Vendémiaire" which we shall also be dealing with in this section. How else can we regard an ending which is so far removed from the brilliant ideas and images with which the poem began ; an ending which in fact reminds us of the ending which he wrote for his version of "Salomé"! (2) We may also cite as evidence in support of our views the tone and language of these two verses which sound rather like a burlesque of the poetry of the nineteenth century dramatists, especially in the use of the second person plural of the preterite tense as a rhyme which underlines its ridiculously pompous sound. There is also the fact that the views expressed in these verses are totally out of keeping with the ideas of any of the other poems to be dealt with in this section or with those of the poems considered in the preceding section.

(1) cf. Déc., pp. 126-127

(2) cf. Ch.2, sec.3

It may perhaps be argued that here is another example of Apollinaire lacking the courage to carry to the fullest development the implications of his ideas concerning the subconscious and the role of the poet as a Mage and prophet, but we think it unlikely. It remains a mystery to us why a poem which begins on such a note of sublime shock to the consciousness of the reader, and which develops the use of violence as do "Les Fiançailles" and "Le Brasier", should end on such a note of banality both in its imagery and in its content. Unless as we have suggested the answer lies in Apollinaire's separating himself from the poets of the "Abbaye" group.

"Ce rapprochement vers "l'Unan^{im}isme" va être de courte durée, Apollinaire a trop d'originalité pour se plier à un dogmatisme d'école. (. . .) Il y aura bientôt des incidents, l'article d'Apollinaire attaquant "L'Armée dans la ville" et, plus tard, l'éreintement d'Alcools par Duhamel marqueront, définitivement, leur désaccord doctrinal . . . " (1)

"Cortège" was not published until November of 1912 (2) and it is possible that having failed to finish the poem at the time when he was most sympathetic towards the views of the unanimists, Apollinaire did not wish to continue the line of thought which he was developing in the poem, but did not wish to discard so effective and so brilliant a text, so wrote an ending to the poem which was intended as a tongue in cheek "exposé" of the unanimists' ideas.

In any case we have seen that that part of the poem which we consider to be most successful continues the exploitation of the

(1) cf. Adéma (68) p. 160

(2) cf. Déc., p. 124

techniques of violence which the poet developed in "Les Fiançailles" and so we pass on to the next poem which we wish to consider, namely "Vendémiaire" which with "Cortège", originally entitled "Brumaire", was to have been part of a sequence of poems on the theme of "L'Année Républicaine".

"Vendémiaire" opens on a note which recalls Villon's "Frères humains qui après nous vivez". :

"Hommes de l'avenir souvenez-vous de moi

Je vivais à l'époque où finissaient les rois" (I)

It is a beginning which could be seen as containing a certain literal truth at the time of the poem's composition. But it is also a beginning which associates Apollinaire with the kings, as he associated himself with the prophets in other poems. The kings are no ordinary mortals as we can see from line four :

"Et trois fois courageux devenaient trismégistes"

The poet does not seem simply to be referring to courage in the face of suffering giving strength ; the line has distinct overtones of magical powers and the poet seems to be claiming these for himself, as he has done in "Cortège" and other poems which we have analysed.

The next verse changes the tone to that of lyrical description and in the second line introduces the metaphor which is to form the basis of the poem :

"Que Paris était beau à la fin de septembre

Chaque nuit devenait une vigne où les pampres

Répandaient leur clarté sur la ville (et là-haut)"

The theme of the poem is a Dionysiac orgy in which the poet finds

communication with the entire universe. As in the above lines he transforms everything into vine, grape and then wine which he drinks so that he boasts towards the end of the poem :

"Je suis ivre d'avoir bu tout l'univers" (I)

The unanimist basis of the poem is clear, but what interests us principally is the extent to which the poet develops the imagery in terms of the techniques of violence in, say, the numerous metamorphoses which are present in the poem. If we take the lines from the second stanza quoted above as an example, we find them sadly lacking in force and much more traditional in nature than the images of "Les Fiançailles" or of most of "Cortège". To look more closely at the problem, we remark that the poet in the line -

"Chaque nuit devenait une vigne où les pampres"

- has used a word to link the objects, which are concerned in the metamorphosis, which destroys the potential element of surprise in the transformation in spite of the distance which separates the two terms. The use of the word "devenait" is what differentiates a metamorphosis such as this from the example discussed in the analysis of "L'Emigrant de Landor Road" :

"Un tout petit bouquet flottant à l'aventure

Couvrit l'Océan d'une immense floraison" (2)

The suddenness has been taken out of the transformation and this is what makes the image so acceptable in spite of the fact that it is difficult to think of a night as a vine. And so the assimilation of the "pampres" and the other details into the metaphor are also easily acceptable ; the image has lost its force!

(I) O.P., p. I54

(2) O.P., p. IO6

Further on we find the lines -

"J'ai soif villes de France et d'Europe et du monde

Venez toutes couler dans ma gorge profonde"

- which by virtue of its Gargantuan scale does retain something of the power to surprise the reader, but is still very weak in comparison with lines such as :

"Les géants couverts d'algues passaient dans leurs villes

Sous-marines où les tours seules étaient des îles"

We cannot escape the conclusion that the poet by introducing his potentially very surprising basic metaphor in a non-violent fashion has lost most of his power to astonish the reader, so that even a line such as -

"Ces grains miraculeux qui aux treilles chantèrent"

- which would not have been out of place in "Onirocritique", is considerably weakened in its effect because it is simply a part of the general image of the poem. This consideration enables us to underline the importance of the surprise image, such as those discussed in "Le Brasier" -

"Nous attendons ton bon plaisir ô mon amie

J'ose à peine regarder la divine mascarade

Quand bleuira sur l'horizon la Désirade" (I)

- the principal function of which is simply to surprise the reader, to maintain his astonishment. In the case of "Vendémiaire" one has only to announce the theme of the poem and the nature of most of the imagery follows automatically from there. This is not at all true of a poem such as "Les Fiançailles", or even of "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé". That is not to say that "Vendémiaire" does not have

(I) cf. Ch.2, sec.4, pp. 102-103

its surprises, but seen in its place in the perspective of the development of Apollinaire's poetry, it seems as though, having used the techniques of violence as a crowbar to prise apart the well cemented traditional relationships of the components of poetry, Apollinaire was content, in writing this poem, to revert to an only slightly loosened poetic structure.

Such elements of violence as there are in the poem, and many of these find very close parallels in poems such as "Zone" and "Les Fiançailles" where they are exploited to their fullest extent, are very much underplayed :

"Les métalliques saints de nos saintes usines" (I)

- this line is an example of the type of image to be used to such great effect in "Zone", and in fact the passage from which it is taken is developed in a way very similar to the section of "Zone" beginning :

"Et changé en oiseau ce siècle comme Jésus monte dans l'air"

There is a mingling of modern, mythical and almost blasphemous imagery in each. Let us consider the passage from "Vendémiaire" in detail :

"O Paris nous voici boissons vivantes

Les viriles cités où dégoisent et chantent

Les métalliques saints de nos saintes usines

Nos cheminées à ciel ouvert engrossent les nuées

Comme fit autrefois l'Ixion mécanique

Et nos mains innombrables

Usines manufactures fabriques mains

Où les ouvriers nus semblables à nos doigts

(I) O.P., p. 150

Fabriquent du réel à tant par heure

Nous te donnons tout cela

Et Lyon répondit tandis que les anges de Fourvières

Tissaient un ciel nouveau avec la soie des prières" (I)

The passage begins on a note of defiant modernism typical of the poetry of the industrial city, but also typical of Apollinaire in that he chooses to introduce the religious comparison. This is followed by the phallic image of the factory chimneys which provoke the comparison with a mechanical Ixion (who fathered the centaurs in attempting to rape Hera who transformed herself into a cloud). In these lines we have many of the elements of Apollinaire's shock tactics - the mixing of modern and mythical imagery, the sexual metaphor in an almost gratuitous context, the introduction of religious imagery in a near-blasphemous context, all these are familiar or soon-to-be-familiar elements of his poetry. Their effect here is to create an island of shock and surprise which radically modifies our impression of the poem so far. We are not impressed by the image of the city as something which the poet will consume, but by the surprising nature of the images themselves, - they rise out of their context to become almost a short lyric on the modern city in their own right and in a style typical of Apollinaire.

Then the lines "Et nos mains . . ." to "Fabriquent du réel . . ." add a new dimension to the passage. The human and mechanical elements are all confused and melt into one another in the line -

"Usines manufactures fabriques mains"

- and this is achieved by the simple expedient of abolishing the

punctuation. ("Vendémiaire" was the first poem which Apollinaire published without punctuation so that this state of the poem is previous to its publication in "Alcools"). (I)

In the next line we are completely surprised by the adjective "nus" applied to the workers and the comparison of them to fingers. The poet is maintaining the image-complex of human, industrial and sexual components which he has established in the opening lines of the passage, while at the same time continuing to surprise us. Why are the workers naked? Why are they like our fingers? There are certain political interpretations of these lines which would not only be possible but obvious in the work of a marxist poet ; yet these interpretations are just as obviously impossible in the context of Apollinaire's poetry. We cannot, of course, supply any direct answer to the questions. All we can do is remark that the effect of the imagery is to create a comparison between the industrial energy of the city and the sexual drive of the human beings. (There is an interesting parallel here to Apollinaire's comparison of war to the "terrible amour des peuples", but this will be discussed later in the relevant section of "Calligrammes").

And so the passage ends on a note of irony with the words - "La soie des prières" which cannot possibly be taken as a serious image in its religious implications, but which must rather be seen as a humorous extension to the religious parallel of the third line of the passage. In this passage, then, we have the use of the techniques of violence with an efficacy that is only tempered by the fact that they appear grafted on to the poem as a

whole. They are indeed an excellent example of Apollinaire's awareness of the complexity of modern man and his environment and are not irrelevant to the poem as a whole, yet we feel that when they are seen in the context of the entire poem, they represent a passage whose promise has not been fulfilled in most of the rest of the poem. Indeed the line -

"Fabriquent du réel à tant par heure"

- introduces the possibility of the same kind of discussion of the mechanistic nature of reality compared to the suppleness of the worlds of the imagination such as they are embodied in the imagery of the passage, yet this remains as an implication rather than as a developed aspect of the passage.

Let us compare the next passage with the one which we have just analysed :

"Désaltère-toi Paris avec les divines paroles

Que mes lèvres le Rhône et la Saône murmurent

Toujours le même culte de sa mort renaissant

Divise ici les saints et fait pleuvoir le sang

Heureuse pluie ô gouttes tièdes ô douleur

Un enfant regarde les fenêtres s'ouvrir

Et des grappes de têtes à d'ivres oiseaux s'offrir"

The comparison of the second line fails to surprise us because it is part of the general image of the poem. It does not impress us in the way in which the image of the poet as a sun burning between two nebula does in "Les Fiançailles" (I) The paradox created by the word order in the third line appears forced and the image of the rain of blood in the next is hackneyed. As to the image of the

(I) O.P., p. 130

final line, it compares very badly with similar images in "Les Fiançailles" and, as we shall see, in "Zone". (I)

Where the scale of the imagery and the terrible thirst of the poetic imagination really do begin to impress us is in the final lines of the poem :

"Mondes qui vous ressemblez et qui nous ressemblez

Je vous ai bus et ne fus pas désaltéré

Mais j'ai connu dès lors quelle saveur à l'univers"

We find more conviction in these lines than in most of the rest of the poem, which is fitting for a climax, in a way, but reflects badly on the poem as a whole. The power of these lines seems, to us, to spring from the idea of the worlds "made" in the image of someone. In this line we rejoin the anthropomorphic concept of the mind's experience of external reality that is present in the penultimate section of "Cortège". We find ourselves faced with the consideration of the poet's ability to absorb the external world and, by implication his ability to recreate it imaginatively. This is unfortunately absent from most of the poem, with the noticeable exception of the passage on the "villes du Nord" which is analysed above.

Whatever our conclusions about the success or failure of "Vendémiaire", it is obvious that it exploits to a much lesser degree the techniques of violence developed in "Les Fiançailles" and used in the other poems which we shall now analyse.

We pass on now to an examination of the "Poème lu au mariage d'André Salmon". The poem begins with a curious negative construct-

(I) "Les Fiançailles": "Il vit décapité sa tête est le soleil

Et la lune son cou tranché" (O.P. p.132)

"Zone": "Soleil cou coupé" (O.P. p. 44)

-ion, (I) the effect of which is to establish the statements which the poet first wishes to parade before us, then to deny. There is no great degree of surprise involved in this construction, a fairly common rhetorical device, but the statement which really interests us, what the poet did say to himself, is postponed as long as possible thanks to this construction ; and as the intervening possible statements present a certain gamut of possible reactions to the situation, all of which are by no means banal, the final appearance of the line which continues the opening statement appears as the climax to a long cheer, or acclamation being by virtue of its content a very agreeable surprise.

It is typical of Apollinaire that he should insert into his list of possible reactions to the sight of Paris draped in flags a line such as :

"Ni les maisons flambent parce qu'on partira pour ne plus
/revenir"

- which is a sudden and unexpected association of the colours of the flags with the colours of flames followed by an explanation which is not at all a likely one to spring to mind at the sight of the decorations ; in other words the image is a shock image, used purely to upset the reader's forming expectations.

This is also true of the line -

"Ni même on a pendu ceux qui ne savaient pas profiter de la vie"

- which, given that the context of the celebrations is announced in the title of the poem, is an even less likely thought. These images and the others in this opening sequence are in some ways

a justification of the claim which Apollinaire makes in the tenth line -

"Je sais que seuls le renouvellent ceux qui sont fondés en
/poésie"

- in that they are re-presentations of the same scene through the imagination of the poet, while we the readers know from the beginning the reason for the flags and bunting being hung out.

There is no great degree of violence, or even simple surprise in this opening passage, but there is the exposition, indicated above, which is the rationale of the techniques of violence that the poet has evolved. This is developed in the second part of the poem, in which Apollinaire reveals a basic part of his technique. The description of himself and Salmon in what was undoubtedly the cellar where the "Soirées de la Plume" were held takes on a special significance in the line -

"Epris épris des mêmes paroles dont il faudra changer le sens"
- in which Apollinaire looks back not only on their youth but also on their belief in a poetry which is no longer valid, indeed a belief in a language which is no longer valid. The way out of their dilemma is through laughter, but also through a rejection of banal reality :

"Trompés trompés pauvres petits et ne sachant pas encore rire
La table et les deux verres devinrent un mourant qui nous jeta
le dernier regard d'Orphée
Les verres tombèrent se brisèrent
Et nous apprîmes à rire"

The apparent humour of the line describing the demise of the table and glasses does not conceal its very serious content - reality, for the poet, is dead. And humour has found its rightful place in

poetry which is also serious poetry. From this point the next passage follows, for its contents not only illustrate the charm and fantasy of Salmon's poetry, on which Apollinaire wrote at length in an article published in "Vers et Prose", a few months before the composition of this poem, (I) they are also illustrations of what poetry finds "à travers la raison", that is to say they are "surreal" images.

Apollinaire's recreation of the Shakespearian scene is none the less moving for being fantastical :

"Je le revis au bord du fleuve sur lequel flottait Ophélie
 Qui blanche flotte encore entre les nénuphars
 Il s'en allait au milieu des Hamlets blafards
 Sur la flûte jouant les airs de la folie"

In fact the point which Apollinaire wishes to make is that the image, which is detached from reality, is its own reality and through the repetitions of pallor "blanche . . . nénuphars . . . blafards", allied to the combination of death and madness, which are both understated, (Ophelia is still floating and Hamlet's madness is translated by the melancholy music of the flute), the poet creates a very unreal image which despite its unreality conveys the truth of the situation. Thus while we do not feel the image to be violent, in spite of its ignoring the laws of the universe which we know, we do see this image as depending on the same ideas as the techniques of violence ; but perhaps because Apollinaire wished to create something light, in the style of his friend, he has avoided the stronger turn which his own imagery was taking at this time.

Now comes the fourth and final passage of the poem in which

(I) "Vers et Prose", juin-août 1908 ; O.C. t.3, p. 822

Apollinaire takes up again the negative construction which he employed in the first. As in the first section the negative construction is in no way meant to modify the truth of any of the statements which the poet is making, although the line -

"Ni parce que nous avons tant grandi que beaucoup pourraient
/confondre
nos yeux et les étoiles"

- may be taken ironically, when we think of "Les Fiançailles"!

The poet repeats his statement about the powers of poets which leaves us in no doubt that he has retained the poetic ambitions which are apparent in the poems discussed in the last section -

"Ni parce que fondés en poésie nous avons des droits sur les
paroles qui forment et défont l'Univers"

- and which also makes clear to us his preoccupation with the power of language. In fact this line might be seen as an explanation of the image which opens "Cortège".

In conclusion we may say that this poem provides us with more evidence of Apollinaire's thoughts at this period than of actual images, but as we have shown his ideas here are consistent with the use of violence as a literary device. This poem also reveals Apollinaire's concern with reconsidering his past in terms of something from which he now feels himself to be completely separated. To the experience of "Les Fiançailles" is added a new confidence which is apparent in this poem. It is also interesting to note, in passing, that at this time he dedicated a copy of his prose work "L'Enchanteur Pourrissant" with this verse -

"A mon ami Jean Sève
Auquel j'ai lu pour la première fois
L'Enchanteur en 1900. Il était le premier

A qui je confiais mes idées

Personne ne connut ce testament

De ma première esthétique avant lui" (I)

- a further indication that Apollinaire felt that he had achieved the break with the old style of writing that is the source of the tension in "Les Fiançailles". In comparison the calm and restrained style of the "Poème lu au mariage d'André Salmon" points to a considerable increase in his confidence.

We now turn to "Le Voyageur" (2) which is a much richer source of images relevant to our discussion of violence. In this poem Apollinaire returns to the techniques of violence to such an extent that the poem is incomprehensible to those who are not prepared to follow him in his liberation of the image.

The poem begins with an isolated line -

"Ouvrez-moi cette porte où je frappe en pleurant"

- which straightaway brings the inevitable unanswered question - which door? We may reflect that the title should offer some illumination here - the traveller is knocking on a door which clearly will not open for him. He is shut out, but from what? No answer is given to us, certainly not in the next line -

"La vie est variable aussi bien que l'Euripe"

- which again is isolated. But there must be some connection between these two lines, otherwise they would not have been placed one after the other. Apollinaire is using the technique of juxtaposition to create a link which lies beyond the province of logical connection, while at the same time using the space between the lines to set each

(I) cf. Adéma (68) p. 162

(2) O.P., p. 78

down as a statement whole in itself. The reference to the Euripe if somewhat learned does not really obscure the meaning of the line - the fact that it is a stretch of tidal water in which there are as many as fourteen changes of direction in a period of twenty-four hours may not be at our fingertips, and so we may lose some of the force of the image, but the image gains in mystery while retaining the sense of something that is greatly and frequently variable through a kind of reversal of the comparison, by which the variety of life is transferred to the other term.

The poet has deliberately severed these two first lines from all connection with logic, has deliberately deprived them of any introduction which might make them more comprehensible, in order to give them a maximum of force in their action on the reader's mind. Out of their juxtaposition arises the understanding that the door which is closed to the traveller is the one which shields the key to life, which in its variety is incomprehensible as a whole and so must be accepted in its instantaneous nature, however much desire the traveller, who is, of course, the poet in this case, but in fact anyone living as well, may have to discover the pattern which links all the disparate elements which go to make it up. This is consistent with the thought expressed in "Les Fiançailles", not only in the concept of poetry that is put forward in the manuscript, deleted in all probability because it was too direct and explicit :

"Puis j'ai reconnu que chaque moment porte en soi sa propre
/perfection"

This is also the rationale of "Le Voyageur", both in its imagery and its form, for what Madame Durry has called the "Leitmotiv du souvenir" (I) is, as we shall see, a series of memories

(I) cf. Durry, t.3, p. 149

which are juxtaposed without logical connection in the poem, each being a moment in its own right, to be accepted as such, and yet also making us feel the need to find the connection which ties it to the others (a connection which is suggested by the juxtaposition) now that the purely sequential link of time has been removed by the simultaneous existence accorded to them by memory. But, the opening lines are there to mock us. The door will not be opened, we shall not find the key and the only pattern discernible is the pattern imposed by the poem which is in itself an echo of the seemingly disconnected sequence of the events we live.

Thus the next lines break with the first two and present us with an image which we may interpret in terms of Apollinaire's life, but which still presents an enigmatic face to us as we cannot resolve its relationship to the other images of the poem except in the terms already mentioned (I) :

"Tu regardais un banc de nuages descendre
Avec le paquebot orphelin vers les fièvres futures
Et de tous ces regrets de tous ces repentirs
Te souviens-tu" (2)

If we interpret the "paquebot orphelin" as being Apollinaire himself as a child, and the "fièvres futures" as the various intoxications of his subsequent existence, what do we make of the clouds?

(I) We are reminded here of the lines from "Le Brasier" :

"Et le troupeau de sphinx regagne la sphingerie
A petits pas Il orra le chant du pâtre toute la vie"
- the poet/sphinx-herd is parading his mysteries before us and then returning them unsolved to the fold.

(2) O.P., p. 78

Are they not just the image of that very element of mystery which we cannot penetrate? The poet is maintaining the element of mystery and surprise.

There is perhaps a tenuous connection with the next passage, in that it too is concerned with images from a sea voyage, but such is the surreal quality of these lines that we are in no doubt that we are confronted by a totally different memory :

"Vagues poissons arqués fleurs surmarines

Une nuit c'était la mer

Et les fleuves s'y répandaient"

The first line may be seen as traditional metaphors linking the objects named through their physical similarities, waves being the common term, but the suppression of any connecting words or even punctuation greatly increases the power of the images. This presentation of the image acts as a build-up to the mysterious and powerfully evocative image in the next two lines ; in simply enumerating the elements of the image in the first line the poet is involving the reader in them much more ; he is creating a total atmosphere from them and then plunging the reader into the profundity of the next image. Sea and night are united to create an environment of which each is part but neither is the whole, and in this environment we are aware of the various currents that are the rivers flowing into the sea, which might well be a symbol of memories creating the illusion of continuity through the direction they have, yet there are more than one, therefore there is no clear direction ; but we cannot explain what they are ; the image surpasses our conscious understanding of it. Perhaps it is the unconscious mind itself, the source of the poetic image ; in which case there is a significant confrontation to be made with the image

from "L'Emigrant de Landor Road" -

"Un tout petit bouquet flottant à l'aventure

Couvrit l'Océan d'une immense floraison" (I)

- and the "Vagues - - - fleurs surmarines". The transformation in each case springs from a total involvement with the sea on the part of the poet, if, that is, the sea/night represents the unconscious mind. Thus the waves and flowers are visible on the surface, but the connection lies in the depths, the unconscious, of which we are aware but which we cannot fathom. This is a clear demonstration of the indivisibility of form and content in this kind of poetry which Apollinaire is creating.

The next line situates the image as a memory, but there is a change of person, the "tu" present at the end of the last passage becoming "je". This serves to underline the apparent lack of connection between the images and the events in the poet's mind, but as we cannot fail to see that they both refer to the same person, the fact that a connection exists is also brought out ; but again the sequential identity that would be conferred by a belief in continuing time being the important link, is denied. That is to say there is a simultaneous existence of past and present in the poem, the sum of which is the traveller ; but how, or why this identity is established is the mystery we cannot solve.

The next passage begins with a temporal designation which makes it clear that it is a memory, and with a verb of motion that is consistent with the poem's basic metaphor of a journey (in fact the most basic metaphor in literature, and here given a new twist by the destruction of the normal sequence of time and by the

possibility of the reversal of that sequence implied in the image of the directional changes of the tidal waters). There are also certain elements in the description which are undeniably present in order to surprise the reader, to transform the scene from an ordinary one into one which has special significance for the poet (perhaps) and mystery and shock for the reader :

"Un soir je descendis dans une auberge triste
Après de Luxembourg"

The beginning might allow us to think of somewhere we know, to impose on the image our own memory or imagined scene ; but this is impossible after the next line :

"Dans le fond de la salle il s'envolait un Christ"

The similarity of a Christ with outspread arms to a bird with outspread wings may eventually dawn upon us, but there can be no doubt that the poet has chosen this description not to reveal any link between the two, but to shock us. Once again the poet has chosen to use a religious image in a near blasphemous manner as a source of shock. (This image is also a clear forerunner of a whole passage in "Zone" which we shall examine in the next section.)

There is also the presence of the ferret and the hedgehog in the next two lines which we find slightly disconcerting, and which definitely situate the image outside our own memories, as does the final line of the passage :

"Et toi tu m'avais eublié"

Is this the "tu" mentioned earlier, the poet? Is it a woman who loved him? Characteristically there is no answer, the detail remains mysterious. But it contributes to the strange sad note of this scene. It also serves as a deliberate contrast with the first line of the next passage -

"Te souviens-tu du long orphelinat des gares"

- which again contributes to the imagery of travel. It would not be too difficult to find a whole series of episodes and incidents in Apollinaire's life to which these "memories" could be said to correspond, but it seems to us that the important thing is not to show the real incidents which lie behind the images in the poem, for if these images are not convincing in their own right then the poem is a complete failure. Therefore we consider it sufficient to indicate that certain of the details in the poem are undeniably autobiographical, and the others probably so. The crucial matter is whether or not the reader has grasped that the poem is a series of memories and that the justification for their juxtaposition is that they are the fragments of experience which the mind recalls in defiance of temporal order and comprehensible pattern. Therefore the traveller is the poet not only in the sense that most of the memories are concerned with journeys he has made, but also because he is travelling in time, in reaching back into the past in which these memories exist.

The poet's objective, then, must be to make the reader feel these memories as he does, vividly but incomprehensibly connected. To do this he is exploiting the techniques of violence, not only to cause surprise, but also to force the reader to accept these images as they are set out and not as he may modify them in terms of his own experience; in other words he is ignoring altogether the idea of asking the reader to suspend his disbelief and instead forcing the experience on him. This is the function of the unreal or unlikely details such as :

"Nous traversâmes des villes qui tout le jour tournaient

Et vomissaient la nuit le soleil des journées"

The poet is not attempting to find a vivid way of saying something he remembers so that it may appear poetic ; he is trying to destroy the connections between his images and the reader's experience of reality.

This passage ends on a very strange call by the poet :

"O matelots & femmes sombres et vous mes compagnons
Souvenez-vous-en"

Who are the people whom he mentions in these lines? In an earlier section we have already discussed the idea that the image of the sailors was associated in Apollinaire's mind with the image of himself and his younger brother on their travels round France, Italy and Belgium, but to what extent is this apparent in the poem to the reader with no knowledge of the facts of Apollinaire's life? Clearly the reader cannot be at all aware of the existence of a younger brother, there is nothing in the poem to suggest this to him. But in the "Nous traversâmes" of this passage he is told quite clearly that the poet is not alone. This is not enough, however, to make him identify the poet with the "matelots", but the next passage is effective enough to make him feel this, even if at the end of this passage the sailors are seen simply as part of the imagery of travel.

Who then are the "femmes sombres"? They are exactly what the poet describes them as, shadowy creatures, inhabitants of the domain of memory. And the poet's companions? Who else but the readers of his poem. Thus the poet is telling us to remember, to experience as he does the memories, the fragments of a life which he has set out for us in such a way that we must "remember" them as though they were our own memories, but intact, as the poet remembers them and not changed by our own experiences.

"Deux matelets qui ne s'étaient jamais quittés

Deux matelets qui ne s'étaient jamais parlé"

The first line gives a poignant picture of inseparable companions, the second brings an astonishing modification. But in the moment we read that first line we cannot escape the idea that the poet is one of the two sailors. There is no logical reason for this, it seems to us that it arises from the juxtaposition of the two passages. As an image of companionship, the image is too immediate and too deeply felt not to be the poet's own experience. But what are we to make of the second line? We cannot interpret it rationally - it imposes on the idea of the two inseparable companions the feeling that the bond which held them together is strong enough to do so in spite of their inability to communicate to each other. (The great difference in the characters of Apollinaire and his brother spring to mind as does the fact that they underwent together all the vicissitudes of their childhood and youth.) This mute bond which holds the sailors together must surely be something very strong. We might hazard a guess that it is a blood relationship, but this is not a full explanation by any means. Once again the poet is creating a deliberately mysterious image. The next line goes even further :

"Le plus jeune en mourant tomba sur le côté"

The description might be that of a falling statue! Once more we are faced with an image which we cannot explain rationally, but which takes us by surprise and leaves an inescapable impression on our minds - the death is not necessarily a real one, the younger sailor has become for the other an inert and lifeless thing which simply keels over on its side. The image of companionship is now shattered. The memory is tinged with bitterness.

There follows an evocation of remembered details which are unconnected but which accumulate to give the picture of the last line of the passage -

"Les villes que j'ai vues vivaient comme des folles"

- although the poet is not simply seeking to present a memory-image, he is again exploiting the possibilities of surprise which can arise from the juxtaposition of two contrasting elements :

"Sonneries électriques des gares chant des moissonneuses"

The shock which we receive from the justification of the harsh sound of the electric bells and the song of the reapers (it is highly unlikely that the "moissonneuses" are mechanical reapers, given the date of the poem) reminds us of the kaleidoscopic nature of memory. Unrelated images are brought together so that we feel there is some link, but we cannot find it.

There is also the strange description of the bridges -

"Cavalerie des ponts . . ."

- which is clearly intended to take the reader by surprise, as it takes a simple visual element and translates it into a whole image of hustle and bustle. (1) In this, this image is very similar to the opening image of "Zone" in which the poet has selected a minor visual aspect of the scene in order to give a whole new interpretation of it. This is also true of the line :

"Te souviens-tu des banlieues et du troupeau plaintif des
/paysages"

The poet is using the surprise image as a weapon to prevent the reader assimilating the details he remembers to similar details in

(1) All the details in this passage are present in "Zone" where their effect is similar.

his own experience, even if the reader does gather a certain general impression.

The next four verses, quatrains of regular, rhymed alexandrines are taken from a previously composed and unfinished draft of another poem (I). There is a complete change of tone and atmosphere in these verses ; they have a dreamlike quality :

"Les cyprès projetaient sous la lune leurs ombres

J'écoutais cette nuit au déclin de l'été

Un oiseau langoureux et toujours irrité

Et le bruit éternel d'un fleuve large et sombre"

There is a soothing music in these lines and a lengthening effect leading to an opening vista (of the eternal) which shows how well Apollinaire could exploit the regular metres and put this to good effect in a "vers libre" composition. If the element of mystery is still present in the line -

"Un oiseau langoureux et toujours irrité"

- the element of surprise has disappeared except for the surprise we feel on being faced with the transition from the previous passage to this dream-like one. The development of the scene over the four stanzas offers us no clue as to its meaning. The mystery deepens with each verse and in particular with the third :

"Alors sans bruit sans qu'on pût voir rien de vivant

Contre le mont passèrent des ombres vivaces

De profil ou soudain tournant leurs vagues faces

Et tenant l'ombre de leurs lances en avant"

We are dealing here with another kind of unreality, with a world of dreams that reminds us of Plato's example of the man who spends

(I) cf. Déc., p. 106

his life chained between a fire and a wall of a cave on which are thrown the shadows of people who pass between him and the fire but whom he never sees, so that his ideas of reality are conditioned by his experience, in which shadows are more real than people. Within these verses these shadows are as real as any other people who appear in the poem, and just as mysterious. Thus, firstly by preserving the secret of these dream images and secondly by imparting to them the same sadness which permeates the images of remembered reality; the poet is equating the two existences which he has in this poem, the existence within the world of dreams and the existence in the real world, from neither of which can he draw a coherent pattern which explains the whole of existence. The sadness of the world of dreams is made crystal clear in the fourth of the verses written in alexandrines :

"Et ces ombres barbues pleuraient humainement"

The shadows weep as humanly as real people, as does the poet knocking on the door behind which lies the key to the diversity of experience. The arbitrary nature of the experience of dreams is also shown to be identical to that of memory -

"Les ombres contre le mont perpendiculaire

Grandissaient ou parfois s'abaissaient brusquement"

- sometimes the images are large and clear, sometimes small and indistinct.

The comparison which we made with the Platonic image was not just an arbitrary memory ; it seems to us that the implications of this poem and the nature of the shock image itself all run counter to the idea that there is a truth, Platonic or other, which lies behind perceptible reality, and to which we may aspire. The sadness of the dream-figures, the sadness of the memories, the sadness of

the poet all stem from the fact that our apprehensions of reality are fragmentary and remain so in spite of memory which provides an extra dimension of experience for us.(1) Therefore, we ourselves are fragmentary beings, living from one moment to the next with no guarantee of continuity, and the fragments of the past which memory preserves for us do not succeed in making us continuous since memory is also fragmentary and only seems to establish a continuity, as do the images of this poem but we cannot penetrate to that continuity ; it too is behind the door. Before continuing our analysis of this poem we should like to examine certain images in Apollinaire's poetry which refer to memory. Apollinaire saw memory as a rag-bag of recollections without either rhyme or reason:

"Ils forment aussi des crochets et l'on y suspend mille choses
Comme on fait à la mémoire" (2)

- true, there is nothing original or unusual in this, but among these recollections were some which suddenly come to life with great visual intensity :

"Soudain
Rapide comme ma mémoire
Les yeux se rallumèrent" (3)

Finally the arbitrary nature of the associations made by nature and the subconscious mind are clearly seen in this quotation -

"Des musettes bleues des casques bleus des cravates bleues
des vareuses bleues
Morceaux du ciel tissés des souvenirs les plus purs" (4)

(1) cf. Ch.2, sec.4, pp. 126-128

(2) "Le Palais du Tennerre", O.P., p. 254

(3) "La Maison des Merts", O.P., p. 66

(4) "Le Palais du Tennerre", O.P., p. 255

- and of course in the famous image from "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé" in which it is compared to a storm-tossed boat :

"Mon beau navire & ma mémoire
Avons-nous assez navigué
Dans une onde mauvaise à boire
Avons-nous assez divagué
De la belle aube au triste soir" (1)

In the light of these examples there can be no doubt as to Apollinaire's conviction of the fragmentary and arbitrary nature of remembered experience. Therefore we may say that Apollinaire's shadowy figures, like his imagery, are diametrically opposed to the Platonic concept of the universe ; and it should also be obvious that the shock image and the technique of juxtaposition are ideally suited to the expression of Apollinaire's ideas.

To return to the final lines of "Le Voyageur", then, we find that the idea of discontinuity of personality is expressed in the line :

"Qui donc reconnais-tu sur ces vieilles photographies"
Whoever is to be seen on the photographs which the poet is considering, whether it be himself as a child, as M. Décaudin suggests (2), or someone else, the poet can still recognise none, since the subject of the photograph has changed and memory cannot ensure the continuity of that person's existence. Thus the question of the next line, needs to be reinforced by an insistence, "Do you remember . . ., you do remember . . ." :

"Te souviens-tu du jour où une abeille tomba dans le feu

(1) O.P., p. 47

(2) of. Déc., p. 133

C'était tu t'en souviens à la fin de l'été"

The poet now re-introduces the image of the two sailors, perhaps the description of them here is what is before him on the photograph, in any case the poet renders the image very concrete by the inclusion of two simple details :

"L'ainé portait au cou une chaîne de fer

Le plus jeune mettait ses cheveux blonds en tresse"

The effect of this is to impart to the image a clear definition which would then seem to contradict the idea that memory cannot provide a strong enough link with the past, but these lines are followed by the repetition of the two opening lines of the poem, this time in reversed order. Thus the frustration of the traveller is re-affirmed, he remains outside the door, and the poem ends on the statement :

"La vie est variable aussi bien que l'Euripe"

It seems to us fair to say that the theme of this poem lies as much in the spaces in between the lines as it does in the lines themselves ; that is to say that the discontinuity of the technique expresses the discontinuity of human experience. Therefore the success of the poem depends upon the violence of its form, and the violence, or surprise of its content, and this to a greater extent than perhaps any other poem we have considered so far except "Les Fiançailles".

We now propose to examine two other poems of the period in order to show to what extent Apollinaire had developed the techniques of violence during this period. The first of these, "1909", we shall show, depends entirely upon these techniques for its existence as a poem. The second, "Cours de Chasse", we propose to compare with an earlier short lyric, "La Tzigane", in order to

show quite clearly the difference made by the techniques of violence to a poem written on a fairly similar theme to the early lyric, which we have already shown owes only very little to these techniques. (1)

The poem "I909" (2) falls neatly into two parts, the first of which is a description, light in tone, of a pretty, fashionably-dressed woman of whom the poet says :

"Elle était si belle

Que tu n'aurais pas osé l'aimer"

This description, with some repetitions, fills four verses after the third of which is inserted the isolated line :

"N'entendra-t-en jamais sonner minuit"

There is no apparent explanation for this line, it does not have any apparent link with the description which surrounds it.

The second half of the poem is in complete contrast to the first in all respects. To the description of the beautiful young lady is opposed the line :

"J'aimais les femmes atroces dans les quartiers énormes"

and there follows an evocation of the vitality of the industrial city and its inhabitants which is taken from a draft of the poem "Vendémiaire" (3). After this the poet closes with the lines :

"Cette femme était si belle

Qu'elle me faisait peur"

This is the whole of the poem. We can find no meaning on the surface, but the structure of the poem is such that the meaning arises

(1) cf. Ch.2, sec.I

(2) O.P., p. 138

(3) cf. Déc., p. 210

from the opposition of the images. The violent difference that exists between the first and second halves of the poem is what gives meaning to the poem ; and the poet, in preferring the second to the first image, is saying that his poetry must be inspired from the new beauty of the industrial world. Everything depends on the confrontation, the juxtaposing of the two contradictory images (the beautiful lady that the poet is afraid to love and the "femmes atroces") which is, of course, one of the basic techniques of violence that the poet had developed. (1)

A premonitory note of the contrast is to be found in the line:

"N'entendra-t-on jamais sonner minuit"

- which, it has been suggested, (2), is meant to convey to the reader that the young woman is Cinderella and that she will be dressed in rags at midnight, so that the beauty of the description is a false beauty. This may be true, but should the reader fail to make this association in his mind, the effect of the line is to surprise him and to make him feel uneasy in the presence of this description. The line does carry the suggestion that at midnight something important will happen, and for the moment the description of the young woman lies between the reader and the revelation of what this is. This again is in perfect conformity with the techniques of violence as we have defined them and shown them in operation in Apollinaire's poetry.

We now pass on to a consideration of the poem "Cers de

(1) For a similar interpretation see M. Décaudin : Obscurité et composition chez Apollinaire - Cahiers de l'Association Internationale des Etudes Françaises, March 1963, no.15, pp.119-125.

(2) Ibid. p. 125

Chasse" (1). This poem consists of two verses of five lines each and a final couplet. There is no apparent link between either of the verses and the couplet, or between the verses themselves. Only the title seems connected to the final couplet, that is, logically. In fact the poem is an integrated whole in which the relationship of the parts becomes clear through their juxtaposition. There is no apparent logical link from the first stanza to the second, yet the second stanza is a commentary on the first because it is placed after it. And the same is true of the final couplet in relation to each of the stanzas. The surprise, the violence, lie in just that ; the juxtaposition of these apparently unrelated images; and not in the presentation of the images themselves.

The poem begins with a very moving and suggestive image :

"Notre histoire est noble et tragique

Comme le masque d'un tyran"

The image may be original but its form is perfectly traditional. The next three lines may be slightly obscure, but they are in no way violent :

"Nul drame hasardeux ou magique

Aucun détail indifférent

Ne rend notre amour pathétique"

The pathos of their love affair does not derive from anything except its really tragic dimensions. Then comes the next stanza, based on a draft of two lines omitted from the "Chanson du Mal-Aimé" (2), which evokes Thomas de Quincey drugging himself with opium in order to find again the memory of his lost love Anne :

(1) O.P., p. 148

(2) cf. Déc., p. 218

"Et Thomas de Quincey buvant
 L'opium poison doux et chaste
 A sa pauvre Anne allait revant"

To the clear mask of classical tragedy in verse one is opposed the blurred and pitiful attempt to escape reality through drugs. But the stanza closes on two lines which seem to equate the two conflicting images :

"Passons passons puisque tout passe
 Je me retournerai souvent"

All is ephemeral, therefore the experience of dream or drug is to be equated with the clearest apprehension of reality.

And now the final couplet brings us back to the title and also shows that the images of the first and second stanzas are of equal value as memory cannot be trusted to preserve experience in any case. (Surely the final proof if it were needed of Apollinaire's belief in the discontinuity of the human personality).

"Les souvenirs sont cors de chasse
 Dont meurt le bruit parmi le vent"

Again the image is perfectly traditional, perhaps not even original, yet the structure of the poem makes it profoundly original. It is another example of a poem whose meaning is to be found only in the "jeu d'images" ; in the fact that the images bear no apparent relation to one another and hence provide the source of the poem's energy in their conflict.

When we compare this poem with the short lyric, "La Tzigane", of similar length and of similar theme we have a perfect demonstration of the evolution which Apollinaire's poetry has undergone. This poem may contain images which are surprising or mysterious :

"Et l'oiseau bleu perdit ses plumes" (I)

- but on the whole it functions in an entirely traditional way; the imagery illustrating the theme, very successfully, in a way which depends upon the reader's sensibility grasping their significance and feeling the sadness of the poem. Whereas the poems which depend on the techniques of violence force the reader's imagination to make unaccustomed leaps to link one thing with another, or present him with an image so unexpected that he cannot control the poem, but is forced to allow the imagery to act upon his imagination in its own way.

In this period, then, which follows the very ambitious poems of 1907/8, we find no poems of comparable ambition and although we find the ever-present readiness to accept and try out new ideas (Unan^{im}ism) we also find the equally constant refusal to write poems according to any programme. The calm confidence of the tone of the "Poème lu au mariage d'André Salmon" would seem to be justified by the way in which the poet has developed the techniques of violence so that whole, and wholly successful, poems now depend upon them. If these poems are at first sight varied enough, we can, however, discern a certain continuity of themes in most of them : a quest for self-knowledge which is (inevitably) in Apollinaire's case linked to the love of a woman - whether she be real or imagined, lost or newly found - or even seen only in passing.

CHAPTER TWO : SECTION SIX

"ZONE"

In this section there remains only "Zone" to be discussed. There are several reasons for discussing this poem apart from the others which may have common points of inspiration and imagery ; the principal of these is that Apollinaire has often been accused of degrees of plagiarism in the writing of this poem, ranging from the essay by the Belgian, Robert Goffin (1), according to which, "Zone" was directly inspired by Cendrars' poem "Pâques à New York", to the much more reasoned and reasonable examination of Madame Durry which shows that while it is possible that Apollinaire was influenced by Cendrars' poem, it was only superficially and that the modernity of "Zone" lies in characteristics that are unquestionably typical of Apollinaire (2). More recently, Marcel Adéma, in his rewritten biography of Apollinaire (3), goes so far as to state :

"Il est certain maintenant que "Zone" ne fut pas composée après les "Pâques"."

The irrefutability of the proofs which Adéma puts forward is perhaps not complete, but nevertheless, a careful examination of the poem shows that the truth lies definitely in that direction, although it may not be possible to be any more positive than is Madame Durry, who appears to be referring to the same evidence as Adéma. All that we have had to say about violence and its develop-

(1) Entree en Poésie, (Gand) 1948, A l'enseigne du chat qui pêche

(2) cf. Durry, t.I, pp. 235 et seq.

(3) cf. Adéma (68) pp. 224 et seq.

-ment in Apollinaire's work to date, has pointed to originality of technique corresponding to the character of the poet and to his conception of the world. In this section we shall show that this is also true of "Zone", and that therefore it is most unlikely that any possible influence of Cendrars could have been of any great importance in the composition of this poem which Apollinaire chose to put in a position of prime importance in his volume, and that after the publication of "Pâques".

In addition to these authorities we might add that it is obvious to anyone who has heard or read the text of Cendrars' radio conversations (1) that he preferred the picturesque to the true when relating any story (2), as can be deduced from the restrained footnote in Marcel Adéma's biography concerning the death of Apollinaire and Cendrars' version of the story (3).

Let us now pass to an examination of "Zone" in which we shall endeavour to isolate the elements of violence in the poem and point out their importance to the structure as a whole. The poem begins

(1) Blaise Cendrars Vous parle, Oeuvres Complètes (Denoel) t. 8, 1965.

(2) On the occasion of a visit to the archives of the Maison de la Radio we had the opportunity to speak to a producer who had known Cendrars and had interviewed him on more than one occasion. We were offered the opinion that Cendrars often when telling a story allowed himself to forget the truth totally in the interests of the "artistic" effects of his anecdote and frequently ended by believing himself what he had said.

(3) cf. Adéma (68), p. 341 n.

on a statement which, being the first line of poetry in the volume, carries the value of a poetic credo :

"A la fin tu es las de ce monde ancien"

The statement offers immediate links with the title of the poem ; the "Zone" may be either this old world of which the poet is proclaiming himself to be tired (for^{the} tone of the first line is unquestionably that of dialogue with self) or, perhaps, the zone into which he has passed on leaving the old world, an act of which the first line may be the herald. But even with these possibilities of meaning clear from the beginning the line has a certain surprise value, the "A la fin" lending it the tenor of a sigh that seems more appropriate to the end of a meditation than to the beginning, and perhaps because it seems to carry as well the implication that there is somewhere else for the poet to go. (One can also appreciate Apollinaire's delight in beginning his first published collection with these words.) That somewhere (the zone?) would by implication be not only what is to follow in this poem, but in the whole of the volume, as the choice of position of this poem is ascribable neither to chronological order nor to lack of intention on the poet's part. (I)

The manuscript which is contained in the notebook begun under the title "Année Républicaine" offers two variants of this first line (2) :

"Je n'ai jamais vécu que dans un monde ancien"

- this version is scored out, and :

"Je suis écœuré de vivre en ce monde ancien"

(I) cf. Ch.2, last section.

(2) cf. Déc., p.77

- both of which make it clear that the poet's intention was to begin his poem with a renunciation of the old world and which seem to be situated on either side, as it were, of the final version; the former being a more direct statement of fact about the situation, the latter being more concerned with the expression of the poet's feelings, in this case much stronger than the feelings with which the poet leaves us in his final version. The disgust of the manuscript version gives way to weariness in the final version. From this weariness it is no less surprising to go on to the humour of the next line, but indeed even more effective:

"Bergère ô tour Eiffel le troupeau des ponts bèle ce matin" (1)

The shock and surprise of this line resolve themselves in humour, we have no choice but to laugh. The "Bergère" following on the note of the "monde ancien" makes us think of a shepherdess such as one finds in the pastoral lyrics of the eighteenth or seventeenth centuries, and no sooner is this image evoked than we are forced to accommodate it with the Eiffel tower. There is no word of comparison, no expression to make a simile, nothing but the juxtaposition of these two really incongruous elements, which forces us to identify the two. André Billy in his introduction to the Oeuvres Poétiques (2) has spoken of Apollinaire as a baroque poet; and M. Décaudin has reminded us (3) of Hugo's line -

"Le pâtre-promontoire au troupeau de nuées"

-but in neither the baroque conceit nor in the line from Hugo do

(1) O.P. p. 39

(2) pp. XLIV-XLV : without reference to this line, it is true.

(3) Cf. Dec., p. 77. The line should read : "... au chapeau de nuées".

we find what is obviously the basis of Apollinaire's image - the sudden identification of two disparate elements which makes the reaction of the reader inevitable - laughter. Faced with the juxtaposition of two elements which we cannot assimilate one to the other and yet have to, the only possible reaction is laughter; whereas with Hugo's image there is a precise point of similarity which enables us to accept the image, even if we do find a degree of humour in it; and whereas with the baroque conceit humour is not at all the desired result.

In this image Apollinaire is trying to make us aware of how ridiculous it is to try to live in the modern world while thinking or writing in terms of the past. This image is exactly the same kind of image as that crucial one discussed at length in the section dealing with "Les Fiançailles" -

"C'est la lune qui cuit comme un œuf sur le plat"

- that is to say that the poet is bringing together two completely disparate objects, which shocks us, not in order to reveal some hidden similarity between them, whether we equate this with a Platonic truth or reality or not, but to make us aware of the difference which exists between them.

The force of the image lies in its compression, its simple juxtaposition, the result of which is the identification of the two objects, and through this we become aware of the ridiculous nature of the ancient world where it^{is} used as a means to the understanding of the experience of modern man. The comparison of the Eiffel tower overlooking the bridges of the Seine to a shepherdess overlooking her flock rests on a minimal similarity, like the image from "Le Voyageur" - "Cavalerie des ponts . . .". In fact one might say that the image reduces the elements which it presents to us to

a kind of visual skeleton, as it were, in which a vertical line represents the tower/shepherdess, and a series of horizontal lines represent the sheep/bridges, but when we try to see one in terms of the other, the inevitable result is surprise and laughter, although this in no way prevents the image from functioning in a serious manner. (This is also true of the image quoted above from "Le Voyageur", in which the common factor seems to be a kind of arch, and of the image from "Les Fiançailles"- "C'est la lune qui cuit comme un oeuf sur le plat", in which the common factor would seem to be a circle.) (1)

Now the next line takes this identity of the old world and the present world as a fact in saying-

"Tu en as assez de vivre dans l'antiquité grecque et
 demeure"

-when it is clear to us that the poet is not living in ancient Greece or Rome. Putting ourselves in the position of a reader of the first edition of the first volume by a contemporary, we can see no reason for the poet saying that he lives in a world of Greek and Roman antiquity, especially when he has already mentioned the Eiffel tower. We can see no reason that is unless the poet is speaking of a way of looking at the world, rather than of the world itself. (We surely do not see simply a banal reference to the classical and neo-classical decoration of Paris).

(1) Couffignal makes a similar point about the image from "Zone" in his analysis of the "montée au Ciel" in the
"Zone" d'Apollinaire p. 5 (Archives Guillaume Apollinaire n° 4)

And so we find in the first few lines of the first poem the externalisation of the poet's feelings that is typical of his poetry. Thus the zone of the title may be an area as much metaphorical as real; it may be as much the poet's feelings about the world as the world itself.

The fourth line continues the description of the contemporary world as old-

"Ici même les automobiles ont l'air d'être anciennes"
-and again the detail employed could not to the contemporary reader be one which proved the point, but on the contrary one which indicated even more plainly that the poet was not speaking objectively. In this case the poet is using the surprise image to contradict the sense of his words; no man of 1913 could possibly consider motor cars to be ancient, and so would be surprised by the line, eventually realising that the poet could not be speaking about the external world in a purely objective fashion.

On top of this the next two lines come as an even greater contradiction in terms, and even greater surprise-

"La religion seule est restée toute neuve la religion
Est restée simple comme les hangars de Port-Aviation"
The poet has chosen the oldest possible aspect of civilisation and declared it to be the newest, (and vice-versa) comparing it for simplicity to simplest form of shelter (and yet the most modern) which probably existed in Paris at this time, the airfield hangars. But what more unexpected, what more astonishing comparison could he have chosen? Nor is the image entirely free from the suspicion of blasphemy.

Clearly, Apollinaire's intention in this poem is to shock us; to establish in our imaginations a series of images which contradict all our normal apprehensions of reality. And so, possibly,

the zone of the title will at least contain the zone of new experience to which the poet will introduce us in his poem.

The next paragraph, (this is perhaps the best description of the verse groupings which Apellinaire uses in this poem), plunges into the theme of modernism, and in the terms of the things which the poet considers modern perhaps throws an irenic light upon the references to religion, or, perhaps the fact that the poet feels himself detached from religion, unable to confess his sins, indicates that however modern Christianity might become it is still irrelevant to him although he is never free from its temptation.

"Et toi que les fenêtres observent la honte te retient

D'entrer dans une église et de t'y confesser ce matin"

As yet we cannot quite fathom the poet's feelings towards religion, but already we have an idea of their complexity arising from the ambiguity of lines like the above in which the shame the poet feels could be either the shame of the sinner or the shame of the atheist who is still tempted by the consolations offered by religion. In this poem as in many of the others which depend upon the aesthetics of surprise and violence we find mystery and ambiguity going hand in hand with the shock image. The next two lines have very definitely the form of an artistic, as well as poetic, manifesto and no-one reading them can fail to see the germ of the calligrammes already present .-

"Tu lis les prospectus les catalogues les affiches qui
chantent tout haut

Voilà la poésie ce matin et pour la prose il y a les
journaux"

The shock value of these lines may have been somewhat diminished for us by the fact that they became the credo of at least one movement

in the arts since the death of Apollinaire, but we must not underestimate the effect that they had at the time of their publication, especially appearing on the first page of the volume.

The idea that poetry is to be found in the world around one and not in any "poetic" form of expression or sentiment is, then, the modernism which is opposed to the old world, the world of pastoral imagery.

The next paragraph takes up this idea, in its language as well as in the objects named; we have no way of checking this, but these lines probably contain the first use of a word like "sténodactylographe" in poetry! There is no attempt to make the street seem what it is not, the poet recognises the note of a strident vulgarity that is present-

"Les inscriptions des enseignes et des murailles

les plaques les avis à la façon des perroquets criaillent"

-and yet he says that he loves the grace of this street-

"J'aime la grâce de cette rue industrielle"

The violence that is done here to the reader's sensibilities is exactly that which the scene itself would do to them, especially if the reader were, like the poet, sensitive enough to find the beauty that is in the scene. Of course, the shock also arises from the fact that the poet is saying that he likes the scene he is describing, and from the implications of the passage which are that the scene described is the epitome of modern beauty as the newspapers and posters, catalogues and prospectuses are the poetry and prose of the modern age. There is also the implication that, having chosen these things the poet has cut himself off from the world, and the only part of the old world, for which he has confessed his lassitude, which has remained modern enough to tempt him, is Christia-

nity. In that case, the "grâce de cette rue industrielle" has become for the poet an alternative to religion. This is consistent with the conception of the nature of human experience which is the basis of "Le Voyageur", for if the poet were to return to his Christian faith, then although he would not be granted the secret of life, he would not have to weep as he knocked on the door, for he would believe that that secret was in the hands of Christ in whom he would have placed his trust.

Thus the next section begins -

"Voilà la jeune rue et tu n'es encore qu'un petit enfant"
Is this not the expression of some kind of opposition; on the one hand the "jeune rue", on the other, the poet as a child, i.e. when he still believed in Christ? The application of the adjective "jeune" to the street surely makes this opposition clearer and more poignant-the street is the symbol of a new acceptance of life, which is young, but young in the sense that it is new rather than in the sense that it is innocent and pure. Thus the next passage is an evocation of the purity of the faith of the poet's childhood and the name which the poet introduces in the third line of the paragraph is really the name of his eldest friend, his childhood companion, to whom "Calligrammes" was to be dedicated, posthumously.

From line thirty-three to line thirty-nine the poet builds up to a climax using a construction which recalls the litany, repetitive to an almost hypnotic point and denominating aspects of religion-

"C'est le beau lys que tous nous cultivons

C'est la torche aux cheveux roux que n'éteint pas le vent

C'est le fils pâle et vermeil de la douloureuse mère

C'est l'arbre toujours touffu de toutes les prières

C'est la double potence de l'honneur et de l'éternité

C'est l'étoile à six branches

C'est Dieu qui meurt le vendredi et ressuscite le dimanche"

-the last line is a climax of religious belief, the dividing lines between Christians and non-Christians, the mystery of the resurrection of Christ, and it is followed by one of the most daring and effective of all Apollinaire's blasphemous images-

"C'est le Christ qui monte au ciel mieux que les aviateurs

Il détient le record du monde pour la hauteur"

The icon is shattered, the faith of childhood is destroyed, Christ is no longer a God who died to save mankind and ascended to Heaven, but the holder of the world altitude record! Which is in its way, a very modern blasphemy and ^{-not-}inappropriate to the poem.

The next paragraph begins with two very strange lines-

"Pupille Christ de l'oeil

Vingtième pupille des siècles il sait y faire"

Mme. Durré has suggested that there is a pun here on Christ and "cristallin" (1), but puns are only effective in poetry when they are obvious, otherwise one of the meanings escapes- at least this is true of Apollinaire's poetry.(2) These two mysterious lines offer a multiplicity of meanings, none of which can completely exhaust their possibilities. They remain mysterious and surprising. There is, however, an interpretation which parallels the ideas of "Les

(1) Durré, TL, p.287

(2) Cf. J.C. Chevalier, Apollinaire et le calembour; Europe nov-déc 1966 pp.56-75: "(le calembour ne vit que de contextes soulignés.)"

Fiançailles" , "Le Voyageur" and the other important poems of the period; that is that the pupil of the eye, its centre, is here being equated with Christ the centre of Christian religion, and that each is being equated with an historical view-point in the second of the two lines. Thus the eye, through which we observe the world, and Christ, through whom Christians come to see the world, are now both brought into the context of the twentieth century -

"Et changé en oiseau ce siècle comme Jésus monte dans l'air"

In what sense may this century be said to be rising into the air? In the sense that it is the century of the aeroplane, and also in the sense that a century, seen in retrospect presents a certain view of man, and the present century, at the time of composition of this poem, was just beginning and so the view of man which the twentieth century is to present is just becoming visible . And so we see three things which give us a conception of reality, the eye, Christianity, and the historical viewpoint represented by the new century, rising into the air to survey what is below, the world and its inhabitants. There is also the implication that since the eye gives a false view of reality then so does Christ -this even more obvious to the reader who is aware that Apollinaire is the champion of the cubists.

Now the poet presents Christ from the point of view of the demons in Hell-

"Ils crient s'il sait voler qu'en l'appelle voleur"

-but the fact that these words are put into the mouths of devils detracts neither from the seriousness of their content nor from their ability to shock. (The obviousness of the pun here should be an indication that Apollinaire did not really intend the pun Mme. Durry has suggested in the first line of this paragraph.)

What Christ has stolen from the poet is his innocence and also perhaps his childhood, since the faith of the child is one thing that separates him from the man.

But now the lines which follow present us with a problem-

"Icare Enoch Elie Apollenius de Thyane

Flottent autour du premier aéroplane"

-for if we identify the beings named in the first line of the above quotation with the angels mentioned in the preceding line, then we are forced to identify Christ with the first aeroplane! On the other hand it is more likely that they are not to be identified with the angels and that therefore we have two distinct and consequently opposing groups in the sky. Therefore the modernism of religion is a spurious modernism. Or it is possible that in identifying Christ with the aeroplane Apollinaire is himself modernising Christ, that is to say raising to the level of a God the twentieth century; but as it is essentially the twentieth century as seen by Apollinaire, his conception of it, then what the poet is in fact doing is equating himself with Christ so that the tableau which follows is the celebration of the consciousness of the poet/Christ. The "volante machine" is the modern consciousness, the poet its personification.

From these sublime heights the next paragraph drops the reader into the depths of a real despair. There is a total rupture in both tone and content. For the first time the theme of unrequited love is introduced into the poem; and if the interpretation which we have given of the above passage is valid, as we think, then the shock which this transition causes us is so much the greater.

"Maintenant tu marches dans Paris tout seul parmi la foule"

The crowd of flying creatures surrounding the triumphant poet has

become the crowd of the city streets among which he is isolated and lonely.

"L'angoisse de l'amour te serre le gosier

Comme si tu ne devais plus être aimé"

The reason for the sudden plunge is made explicit. If the poet has Christ-like attributes, he is still human and still liable to be wounded by love.

Now the next lines give a much more personal twist to the temptations of the consolations of religion-

"Si tu vivais dans l'ancien temps tu entrerais dans un
monastère

Vous avez honte quand vous vous surprenez à dire une prière"

The change of person distances the poet's self; increases his objectivity in speaking about himself. So the poet brings out the contrast between his temptations (first line) and his determination to remain modern (line two). The next line expresses the constant nature of the conflict as the poet returns to the second person singular and laughs at himself as he mentions almost in passing the fear of hell which must have been a reality to him at some time in his life as he passed from a devout child to a non-believing adult-

"Tu te moques de toi et comme le feu de l'Enfer ton rire
pétille

Les étincelles de ton rire dorent le fond de ta vie"

-but the sparks, the ephemeral points of light and fire, that arise from this conflict light up the poet's memories. (One is reminded of the "girande" in the final section of "Les Fiançailles").

Now, suddenly, the poet freezes his past, and looks on it as objectively as on a portrait-

"C'est un tableau pendu dans un sombre musée

Et quelquefois tu vas le regarder de près"

This sudden immobility contrasts sharply with the exalted motion of the previous paragraph. But the idea of the past as something fixed in an image which may be dispassionately examined fits in with the conception of this poem, as the poet chooses various details from his past and integrates them into the structure of the poem.

The composition of the poem is becoming clear to us; it is the new familiar pattern of composition by juxtaposition of blocks which conflict with one another, of images which change rapidly from one thing to another, of abrupt changes of tone.

Now the poet brings us right up into the present, joining the opening view of Paris to that of the preceding paragraph where he first introduced the theme of "l'angoisse de l'amour"-

"Aujourd'hui tu marches dans Paris les femmes sont
ensanglantées

C'était et je voudrais ne pas m'en souvenir c'était au
déclin de la beauté"

The sudden externalisation of the poet's feelings that takes place in the adjective "ensanglantées" introduces a note of bitterness as distinct from the note of pain and suffering that is present in the preceding paragraph. But the next line is far more surprising to us; if the decline of beauty is situated in the past it means that it has already disappeared from the world. However, the juxtaposition of these two lines associates the disappearance of beauty with the women described in the first line; and therefore we see that the beauty which has disappeared is a beauty that the poet believed in-the fidelity of women.

The next paragraph returns to the theme of religion but with a vulgarity that recalls the cheap icons of places of pilgrimage, nevertheless the poet describes his sufferings from love rather than the temptations toward religion as-

"L'amour dont je souffre est une maladie honteuse"

and the persistence of the image, of love itself or of the woman who has left him, is what makes him continue to live in anguish and prevents him from sleeping at nights-

"Et l'image qui te possède te fait survivre dans
l'insomnie et dans l'angoi^sse"

-where this description would seem more appropriate to the pulling towards Christianity that he feels. Out of this intermingling of the two themes arises the idea that the poet is identifying them as the same thing, and the happiness which has evaded him in profane love, he sees as exactly the same as the happiness of sacred love, each of which is still a strong temptation to him but which he rejects. Thus the image which pursues him is ambiguous-

"C'est toujours près de toi cette image qui passe"

-the Virgin or a lost love!

What now follows is a sequence of memories, situations from the poet's past all brought into the present by the vivid "te voici", or use of the present tense. Throughout the sequence is the implication of the presence of this image which is the source of the poet's anguish; he seems to be saying, "I was here and there and here and here, and always there was the image which haunts me".-

"Nous regardons avec effroi les poulpes des profondeurs

Et parmi les algues nagent les poissons images du Sauveur"

The Mediterranean, scene of his childhood, and the image of Christ.

"Et tu observes au lieu d'écrire ton conte en prose

La cétaine qui dort dans le cœur de la rose"

His travels in Europe and the unhappiness of his love for Annie was to bring him (1)-

"Epouvanté tu te vois dessiné dans les agates de Saint-Vit

Tu étais triste à mourir le jour où tu t'y vis"

A religious experience which brought sadness and fear.

And so on; the Dutch girl who is unfaithful to her fiancé, his arrest in Paris which led to the religious poems written in the Santé. All these temptations, all these experiences are brought together to be simultaneously present, just as the poet's past sufferings through love are identified with his present-

"Tu as souffert de l'amour à vingt et à trente ans"

But the poet now appears to have attained some kind of wisdom from his sufferings, some degree of self-knowledge-

"Tu as fait de douloureux et de joyeux voyages

Avant de t'apercevoir du mensonge et de l'âge"

The lie may be the lie of religion or the lie of love, most likely it is both. Now the poet has reached a point where all his feelings, all his problems are present, and this is translated by the switching of pronouns, so rapidly that the reader cannot escape the image of the poet both past and present in simultaneous presence before him-

"Tu n'oses plus regarder tes mains et à tous moments je voudrais sangloter

Sur toi sur celle que j'aime sur tout ce qui t'a épouvanté"

(1) One is reminded of Blake's "O rose thou art sick".

The weariness of the beginning of the poem has become a much more profound self-pity and the implication of possible escape to another world has disappeared entirely. We are prevented from rejecting the poet's self-pity as a shallow emotion by the violence of the technique employed and also by the profundity that is added through the dimensions of religious experience.

There follows an evocation of emigrants in the Gare Saint-Lazare which recalls the poem "L'Emigrant de Landor Road", and the ⁿferlorn[^]ness of their hopes is translated in lines such as this-

"Ils espèrent gagner de l'argent dans l'Argentine"

-which seems to leave us no choice but to see them as naïve, and by extension the poet as naïve also, should he hope to escape his difficulties through travelling. Thus we find ourselves reconsidering the area designated by the Zone of the title; it is a zone through which the poet is travelling an emotional zone seen at times as a real geographical one. In this respect the "Zone franche" of the Jura between France and Switzerland and containing elements common to both- might well have provided the title for the poem (1)- for constant in "Zone" is the opposition between old and new, faith and lack of it, love and betrayal etc.-the impression of a middle ground between a future that is nowhere made clear in the poem and a past/present that is felt overwhelmingly, is strong.

The futility of trying to escape is brought out in the line-

"Cet édredon et nos rêves sont aussi irréels"

-in which the reality of the eiderdown is transposed into the

(1) On this point see Adéma(68) pp. 205-206.

domain of unreality as it is a symbol of what the emigrants are trying to take with them from their old life to the new, but we can no more take what we want from our past than we can make our dreams real. Nor, it is apparent, can Apollinaire take his childhood faith into the future. The past dictates itself through our memories. The following fragments are proof of this as the poet, in need of consolation is confronted by memories which only pain him, so that he exclaims-

"Et tubeis cet alcool brûlant comme ta vie

Ta vie que tu bois comme une eau-de-vie"

And so the poem ends in solitude and self-pity, but a self-pity which is ennobled by the poet's capacity to feel pity for others-

"J'ai une pitié immense pour les coutures de son ventre"

Dawn is approaching, the tinkling of milk-cans gives a tinny echo to the "cloche rageuse" of the industrial street at the beginning; then suddenly the poet inserts the lines-

"La nuit s'éloigne ainsi qu'une belle Métive

C'est Ferdine la fausse ou Léa l'attentive"

-of course, the identity of the women mentioned is not revealed to us, but this does not prevent us from seeing them as symbolic of the women who have betrayed the poet. The particularity which the poet introduces by naming the women is simply an element of surprise.

The poem draws to a close with a picture of the poet returning home to sleep among his "inferior Christs", his statues which have lost their deity and are no longer tempting. But the end of the poem comes with an image which is the most powerful in the poem.

The regularity of versification disappears, all attempt at form and logical connection disappear also--

"Adieu Adieu

Soleil cou coupé"

The image of the rising sun is juxtaposed with that of a decapitated neck; the traditional image of renewal, rebirth and hope is assimilated to an image of death and despair (1). The broken ^hhythm created by the repetition of sounds produces an effect almost of incoherence. The poem ends upon a shock image which is evidence of the profound originality of Apollinaire not only in this poem but also in his style; for if M. Decaudin has pointed out that Hugo had written a line--

"Je regardais rouler cette tête coupée

--it lacks the devastating power of Apollinaire's image which is far more violent; violent not only in that it violates normal use of language, abolishing all syntactic links to create another kind of link that is unbreakable, but also violent in that it offers the reader no way of approaching it that could attenuate its strength. The physical proximity of words "soleil" and "cou coupé" is absent in Hugo, it is all that is present in Apollinaire.

Thus we see that "Zone" depends upon the aesthetics of violence as we have shown them to be elaborated in the poetry of Apollinaire from the time of composition of "l'Emigrant de Lander Road".

Therefore whatever we may consider the status of the poem to be in relation to Cendrars' "Pâques à New York" we cannot deny that it has its place in the line of Apollinaire's development at the time of its

(1) Dawn is also here assimilated to sunset; time past to time present

composition and so cannot be seen as a straightforward piece of plagiarism. There is nothing in Cendrars' poem to approach the violence of Apollinaire's. (1)

- (1) It is astonishing that Ceuffignal should not go further than he does in his assertions of the importance of the original elements of Apollinaire's poem (in ' "Zone" d'Apollinaire ' pp. 25-30). He also appears to ignore the evidence offered by Adema (op.cit.) and Décaudin (op.cit.) for the dating of the original manuscript of the poem.

CHAPTER THREE : CALLIGRAMMES

SECTION ONE : INTRODUCTION -"LIENS"

We propose to analyse in this chapter the poetry which Apollinaire wrote between the time of publication of "Alcools" and his death. The choice of the dates of the periods covered by "Alcools" and "Calligrammes" does not mark for us a fixed point of change in the evolution of the poet ("Liens", the first poem of "Calligrammes", was published a few days before the appearance of "Alcools") but simply serves as a convenient dividing line. As "Calligrammes" is a volume which is arranged in more or less chronological fashion, we shall deal with the sections of the volume in the order in which the poet set them out, with only one or two minor modifications, and also with the poems to Lou and to Madeleine in their appropriate place, as well as the small pamphlet published in 1917, "Vitam Impendere Ameri".

Apollinaire himself underlined that his second volume of poetry was a continuation of his first, and tried to indicate this in the dates which he assigned to "Calligrammes". This is one of the things which we intend to demonstrate in this section, in which we shall analyse "Liens", a poem which although included in the section "Ondes", is marked by its presentation in italic types separate from the rest of that section, and which is intended as an introduction to the volume. (It is surely superfluous to point out the importance of type setting in a volume such as "Calligrammes"). "Liens" not only sets out the poet's aesthetic preoccupations in "Calligrammes", it may also be regarded as a summary of what the poet had achieved in "Alcools". It is an "art poétique" set at the beginning of the book to which "La Jolie Rousse" responds at the end.



"Liens", as the title announces, is a poem about links or bonds. We have seen in our analyses of poems such as "Les Fiançailles", "Le Voyageur" etc., how the poet deliberately abolished certain established links in his poetry, syntactical, logical and formal, and in so doing in fact increased the number of links which could exist in his poetry. Stated as a simple formula this process is quite obviously—where no definite link is stated, all links are possible. And, as we have also seen, this can be taken even one step further, so that two objects placed next to each other with no definite relationship between them stated, can become so linked as to be identical. We quote, for the sake of brevity, but one example—

"Soleil cou coupé"

—from "Zone". This is what has been designated quite simply as the technique of juxtaposition, but it is also, as we have demonstrated, a violence perpetrated on the sensibility of the reader, and in some cases, such as the one above, a violence done to the language itself. Now for the first time we find Apollinaire stating quite specifically that this^{is} the way in which he writes, and he demonstrates the statements in the images he uses in this poem. The title, then, "Liens", leads us straight into the first line—

"Cordes faites de cris" (1)

"Cordes" are obviously links, and a cry may establish a link between two people, but it is obviously a logical impossibility that cords could be made from cries. It is clear, then, from the first line of the poem that logic has no place in what the poet is saying, just as it has no place in the technique which he is using. There is

also in the first line a slight leaning towards one of two possibilities which are present in the title, namely that a bond may be good or bad, and that usually when one is tied to something, this is bad. But the metaphorical quality given to the cords prevents this from being inevitably the case, while leaving the suggestion intact.

"Sons de cloches à travers l'Europe"

The second line is linked to the first by the continuation of the idea of sounds serving as a link, it is also an example of a non-concrete link. It also provides a setting in which the first two lines renew their ambiguity; for the occasions on which there is a ringing of bells and people crying in the streets are of two basic kinds, when more than one country is involved—they are either war, or some form of celebration of peace, the signing of a treaty perhaps. Thus the idea of good and bad is continued.

The third line is even more compressed than the first two—

"Siècles pendus"

There is nothing except the proximity of the second and third lines to link the hanged or hung (the image carries both senses) centuries with the sound of bells in the preceding line. Yet this link is firmly established. The bells, being in some cases hundreds of years old, may be said to be hanging centuries. Therefore, they are in a way the symbols of those centuries (in this particular instance) and the link that is created here is the link between image and reality; the poet is commenting on his own technique! But this is not all : for "pendus" contains the senses of both hung and hanged, contains both good and bad aspects of the same thing. If the centuries are hung, this represents a continuation of time; the continuation of the presence of the object, bell, being at the same time the

continuation of the reality, century-time, of which the object is the symbol. Thus the bells are a presentation of the simultaneity of past and present. But, if the bells are hanged, that is to say the centuries, then, the past is destroyed by the present; it is executed. In which case the sounds of the bells may be interpreted as memories, fragments of the past. All of this, however, depends upon the identification of the centuries with the bells, and this is possible not so much through the adjective "pendus" being applied to the centuries, but through the juxtaposition of the two lines. That is to say that the link is created through the suppression of links, for the "pendus" would not have been enough to create the link had the lines been separated, and the juxtaposition of the lines renders superfluous the use of a specific link such as "qui" which would have been possible in this case i.e. -

"Sons de cloches à travers l'Europe

Qui sont des siècles pendus"

But this precision would have destroyed the possibility of the link which exists between the "Siècles pendus" and Europe. Which link makes possible the interpretation Europe = arrested time, this being an introduction of the historical dimension of place, i.e. in the presence of old buildings a place may contain both past and present. This is therefore another link that is set up, that of time and place. Or there is the possibility Europe = destroyed time, which may be interpreted in many ways; for example, the present state of Europe is due to various wars, which fits in with the occasion for the ringing of bells and people shouting; or the present existence of Europe denies its past of which there are only echoes in,

say, historical monuments-denies that is in the sense that the present is only one of the possibilities of the past, and therefore is a denial of some aspect of it, or, denies in the sense that modern democratic Europe is the denial of feudal monarchical Europe.

The next verse begins-

"Rails qui ligotez les nations"

-which is a reprise of the linear bond of line one, as well as being something specifically modern and hence a contrast with the preceding lines. A railway line may of course be used for peaceful communication and travel or for sending troops.

This image is radically modified by the following one-

"Nous ne sommes que deux ou trois hommes"

-which is associated to the linking rails by the juxtaposition of the lines. We think immediately on reading this line of the few who formed the artistic Avant-garde of Europe and the international character of the group, but this is not essential to the poem. What the poet is saying is that the links between nations are formed by only two or three men. But then the next line creates a paradox-

"Libres de tous liens"

-a paradox which is the very essence of this poem and of the style which the poet has developed; when one is free of bonds, then all bonds are possible. And the next line suggests the creation of these-

"Donnons-nous la main"

This verse also continues the bonds and oppositions of the preceding one, for, the link between those who are free from all links is a present one, one which the poet wishes to create now. But the freedom of those who are to create these links must include freedom from the past, from its links and oppositions, therefore the present is in

opposition to the past, but is also in a way a continuation of it for it too is to be an establishing of links, as the past was. The establishing of new links, of course, implies the destruction of the old; the present destroys the past, and implicit in this is the idea that the present will in its turn be destroyed; the twentieth century will join the nineteenth as a hanging bell. Which idea of course, yet another link.

The next line is a complete change of imagery-

"Violente pluie qui peigne les fumées "

-but still a statement of the same idea, as it represents the lines of rain (links of one kind) passing through the clouds of smoke (links of another) in the same way that a comb passes through hair. Thus the rain is violent because destructive, yet also violent because creative, the links which it creates being new and unexpected. This image is surely a summary of all the aspects of violence in literature!

The linear-spatial aspect of this image is continued in the next line which returns us to the initial image-

"Cordes"

-and which also by its juxtaposition implies that the rain and the "fumées" are cords, i.e. links.

But the simple linear quality that is already implicitly challenged in the complexity of the first line is surpassed completely by the third,-

"Cordes tissées"

-which establishes a web, which makes possible communication from anyone point to any other. (This is undoubtedly implied in the century/bell/sound complex of the second verse.) The idea of commu-

nications becomes explicit in the next line-

"Câbles sous-marins"

-which re-introduces the temporal aspect of the poem as the undersea communications links are a phenomenon of the present age.

There is a complete contrast to this in the following line-

"Tours de Babel changées en ponts"

The tower of Babel was built by men at a time when all men spoke the same language, and so in that respect was the result of a link between men, and was an attempt to reach God, i.e. was intended to be a link. The result was of course the destruction of the tower by God and a curse upon men which led them to speak different languages thus preventing them from communicating with each other. Therefore the tower of Babel was finally the destruction of a bond. But in the poet's image, the towers of Babel are changed into bridges (horizontal links instead of vertical; links between men instead of links between Man and God) which are also links-the implication of the choice of Babel (instead of just plain towers) is that the towers become new links, and this through their destruction. This is again the equation: where no links are specified all are possible. It is also a paradox in another way, as it sees that what divides mankind, also binds it, i.e. languages.

This first allusion to Man's relationship with God is followed up by a very strange and powerful image; a juxtaposition of two apparently unrelated things which are this time linked by a hyphen-

"Araignées-Pontifes"

The image clearly comes as a shock to the reader who may find the identification of the Pope to a spider blasphemous, but it is not necessarily so. True the spider builds its web to catch its prey, and

and true the idea of a web of communication, a system of multiple links, is here being compared to the brotherhood of the Christian faith with the Pope at its head; but the fact that the image is in the plural may suggest that the reference is not necessarily a direct one to Christianity. But clearly a large measure of the image's shock value derives from the vision of the Pope as a spider which it conjures up and as the latter is inseparable from Christianity, so the former is generally considered to be a predator, rather than simply an ingenious builder.

But the "Pontifes" continues the reference to bridges in the preceding line just as the image of the spiders seems to fit with the "Codes tissées", and so the implication of the image may be that any system of links leads inevitably to a centre or some kind of focal point at which there sits the spider/Pope i.e. he who constructed the links for the purpose of devouring whatever came into contact with them; he who is the substitute for God; he who is the builder of bridges (Pontifex). The image may be interpreted in many ways, but whatever meaning one puts upon it, it is clear that it points to some kind of centre existing for the co-ordination of links and/or the information that these links bring -this may be either good or bad. It is obviously bad if the poet sees the Popes as spiders, at the centre of the web of Christianity, devouring the adherents to the faith; it is just as obviously good if what the poet is describing in each man at the centre of his web of links with the world and his fellow men, that it to say his senses, devouring the information which that web brings him; or, of course the image

8.2.5. 92

~~we~~ may be all of these things plus the intermediate stages, i.e. the Pope as the co-ordinator of Christianity and each of us as the devourer of our fellow human beings with whom we form links.

As a result of this, the following line-

"Tous les amoureux qu'un seul lien a liés"

-is seen as a simple link, which nevertheless binds many people together, as opposed to a web with a centre. Therefore love has no spider to devour us. Therefore love is the bond which ought to bind us. (An idea which Paul Eluard would have appreciated.)

The next verse concerns-

"D'autres liens plus ténus"

-such as the light, shafts of which might be seen as cords-

"Blancs rayons de lumière"

"Cordes et Concorde"

It should not be overlooked that white light is composed of all the colours of the spectrum, and therefore light is a sum of colours bound together. In the same way, "Concorde" might be a play on words equivalent to "Cordes tissées" or several cords woven together. Light can also be a link, of course, in the way in which it is in a painting, i.e. by illuminating the objects in a painting from a certain angle, one is using light to create a dimension in which the objects are all present and hence linked in this way. Light may be a link in the sense that all who are in the sun's light share that in common; or in the sense that all men need the light of the sun in order to live. As to the "Cordes et Concorde", a harmony is an obvious bond. One also thinks of the Place de la Concorde which is the meeting place of many streets. Why should these be tenuous?

It is more probable that they are subtle.

The next verse breaks completely from this list of bonds-

"J'écris seulement pour vous exalter

O sens ô sens chéris"

-but reveals a bond of another kind- that is of the writer to his senses. The poet declares that he writes only for the exaltation of his senses and then calls them-

"Ennemis du souvenir

Ennemis du désir

Ennemis du regret

Ennemis des larmes

Ennemis de tout ce que j'aime encore"

The senses are the enemies of memory because we experience the world through our senses and each experience may replace or destroy a memory; at the same time memories are due to our sensual experiences therefore the line is a paradox, and this is true of the following lines also. The senses are the enemies of desire (which surely cannot exist without them) because they are alien to the prologⁿation of any single desire, and because when they are satisfied, desire disappears. The senses are the en^emies of regret (which again surely cannot exist without the senses) because they are open to new experiences which may destroy regret. They are the enemies of tears because they are open to new happiness.

The "enmity" is in each case paradoxical, for the senses are the authors of the experiences named. In this the poet reveals to us something of the nature of the bonds; a bond may also destroy what it joins, as well as creating something new from the two ends which it links.

Thus the author, at the center of his web of sensory connections with

the world, is celebrating these links in his writing, at the same time as he is saying that they are the enemies of all he loves because they constantly lead to something new. This is almost^a reversal of the metaphor as the spider is now bound by his web, or the pontiff separated from God by bridges he has built which are of course his towers by which he might hope to reach God. That is to say that the senses impose a lateral sequence, in which one experience succeeds, and therefore destroys the preceding one; whereas the poet seeks a vertical or simultaneous experience in which one thing is added to another.

The exaltation of the senses is achieved through writing because the poet may abolish all links which establish a linear relationship (a cause and effect relationship at its simplest) and attain the state in which desire and satisfaction are present at the same time. In other words through the abolition of simple links between two things the poet may achieve their identification.

This most important poem seems to us to be the continuation of a revealing line from "Les Fiançailles"-

"Liens déliés par une libre flamme Ardeur"

-in which, it will be remembered the "libre flamme" represents the power of the liberated imagination. The abolition of links, their untying, creates new links, in fact, the maximum level of identification and the result of this is the "Ardeur" which is experienced by both reader and poet. It is in this way that we consider this poem "Liens" to be a poem of violence; firstly, that is, in the abolition of logical links- we have only to think of the first line-and secondly in its creation of the maximum possible number of links ~~through~~

through its liberation of the imagination. For the reader the imagination may be said to be freed by the images of the poem from the restrictions of his consciousness and his own experience so that he experiences the "Ardeur" of a consummated experience which is not of his own making. Therefore his experience of the poem is a violent one to the extent that he has been forced, by the abolition of links which may be followed logically, to accept an imaginative experience of which he is not the author. This is the aesthetic of "Calligrammes" and also that of certain of the poems of "Alcools" after "L'Emigrant de Landor Road".

CHAPTER THREE: SECTION TWO

ONDES: (A) LES FENETRES AND LUNDI RUE CHRISTINE

In this section we are going to deal with the remainder of the poems grouped by Apollinaire in the section of "Calligrammes" entitled "Ondes".

We shall begin by analysing "Les Fenêtres" and "Lundi rue Christine" which we are considering together because of similarities in intention which will be clearly demonstrated. For the moment we may limit ourselves to the statement that both poems are "poèmes-conversation", as they have been called, and we shall attempt to show what this means as well as how much the idea owes to the concept of violence in literature.

Apollinaire was later to write of "Les Fenêtres" (1)

"Puis, j'aime beaucoup mes vers depuis "Alcools", il y en a pour un volume au moins et j'aime beaucoup "Les Fenêtres" qui a paru à part en tête d'un catalogue du peintre Delaunay. Ils ressortissent à une esthétique toute neuve dont je n'ai plus depuis retrouvé les ressorts, mais dont j'ai avec étonnement retrouvé l'exposé dans une de vos divines lettres."

We shall endeavour to show in what way the aesthetic of these poems was new, and shall later discuss the degree to which Apollinaire turned away, voluntarily or involuntarily, from it. We do not, however propose to attempt a precise definition of what "Orphisme" was for Apollinaire, although we shall have occasion to refer to it.

(1) Tendre comme le souvenir, letter of 30 th July 1915, O.C.N. T.4

Instead we refer the reader to the articles of S.I. Lockerie (1) and J.G. Clark (2) on the subject of these poems and of Orphism.

We begin with "Les Fenêtres", this being the poem which most of all has led to ^{the} supposition that Apollinaire was attempting to repeat in literature the experiments of his friends in the domain of the visual arts. In this case the fact that the painter Robert Delaunay created a series of paintings entitled "Les Fenêtres" at the time when Apollinaire composed this poem, has led to the often repeated claim that the poem is the literary counterpart of the paintings. There are indeed certain undeniable connections between the poem and the paintings.

(1) Le Rôle de l'imagination dans "Calligrammes"-1, R.L.M., n°s 146-149, 1966; also Qu'est-ce que l'Orphisme d'Apollinaire, Colloque de Stavelot, 1965.

(2) A refutation of Lockerie's analysis of "Les Fenêtres" in R.L.M. 1968, series on Apollinaire n°7. We cannot agree with what Clark says as our analysis of Apollinaire's ^{poetry} lends itself to the support of most of Lockerie's ideas and furthermore, Clark's article is more than a little exaggerated in its claims that there is a colour structure in the poem which exactly parallels that of Delaunay's painting. We would remind him of Apollinaire's statement- "Il n'y a pas de rapports de la peinture à la littérature"-published in an article on Matisse, La Phalange, 15 Dec., 1907, O.C. t.4 p.84.

We know that the first publication of the poem was in January 1913 edition of "Poème et Drame"(1), buth that it also appeared the same year in the catalogue to the exhibition of paintings given by Delaunay in Germany and in all probability the poem was commissioned by Delaunay for that purpose . There are also conflicting anecdotes about the composition of the poem, and the version given by Delaunay, his wife and Cendrars has it that Apollinaire composed the poem in Delaunay's studio, certain objects in the poem, such as the "vieille paire de chaussures jaunes devant la fenêtre" belonging to either Delaunay or his wife; another version has it that the poem was composed, with the help of some friends in a café. It is, of course, possible that there is an element of truth in each story, but whichever tale we choose to believe, it is certain that Delaunay and his work had some influence on the poem.

For S. I. Lockerie, "Les Fenêtres" is the prime example of the poèmecréé"(2) and owes more to Apollinaire's idea of what Delaunay was attempting to do than to what Delaunay considered to be his task and achievement-

"Aussi bien chez Delaunay que chez Picasso, Apollinaire aura donc choisi les éléments correspondant le mieux à l'exigence qui était au centre de son propre oeuvre. En méditant leur exemple il a pu imaginer un art qui à la fois participerait de toute la nouveauté excitante de la révolution picturale, et satisferait cette soif de prédominance lyrique dont sont marqués ses plus grands

(1) O.P. p. 1079

(2) Lockerie:"Les Fenêtres" in R.L.M. 1968, series on Apollinaire n° 7.

poèmes. Dans cet art la mesure de son génie serait d'abord le bouleversement qu'il aurait produit dans le monde ordonné de la réalité normale; mais ce désordre ne serait finalement qu'une première étape vers la création d'une nouvelle structure dynamique qui lui permettrait de s'imposer et de rêver au sommet de son oeuvre."(1)

It is certainly true that "Les Fenêtres" shares many of the characteristics of the poetry which Apollinaire had written previous to his meeting with Delaunay and his interest in Orphism. A glance at the poem is sufficient to persuade that the poet had completely abolished any idea of logical continuity from one line to the next. Consider the following lines-

"Du rouge au vert tout le jaune se meurt

Quand chantent les aras dans les forêts natales

Abatis de pihis

Il y a un poème à faire sur l'oiseau qui n'a qu'une aile" (2)

There may be a connection between the one-winged bird of the last line and the "pihis" or there may not, but apart from that possible link between two of the lines, we think it perfectly fair to say that there is neither ^hyme nor reason in the order of the lines themselves- and that is clearly what the poet intended. Yet no-one could possibly claim that this is something new in Apollinaire's poetry. What is different is that the poet seems here to be restricting himself to

(1) Lockerbie, R.L.M. 1968, séries on Apollinaire n° 7. p.11

(2) O.P. p.168

the rôle of destroyer rather than being the destroyer of the world we know and simultaneous creator of a new world as he is in "Les Fiançailles", "Le Voyageur" etc. We are not faced here with the juxtaposition of disparate elements which create for us an unexpected and surprising image.

That is not to say that surprise is absent from the poem, clearly the unexpected element remains in the content of each line, but this time the abolition of links between the lines and between the images has been carried a stage further than in poems such as "Liens". We cannot even say that all the images in these lines are things which might have been seen from a window, ^h whether that of De-launay's studio or not. For Lockerbie the poem falls into two basic parts, of which the first is intended to destroy any coherence of perception and the second to reconstitute it.⁽¹⁾ But ~~these~~^e segments of the poem are not separate as are the sections of, say, "Les Fiançailles"; rather they are interwoven. ⁽²⁾ In our opinion Lockerbie's analysis of the poem is a very revealing one and to which we lend our support.

The two distinct movements in the poem are, as we have said, interwoven; the first movement consists of three large segments—namely the lines 2-9, 14-18 and 19-26 (the distinction between the latter two being, for Lockerbie and for us, that 19-26 is not composed of fragments of conversation, although its effect is fragmentary; the second movement of the poem begins with the first line—

"Du rouge au vert tout le jaune se meurt"

(1) Lockerbie, R.L.M. 1968, series on Apollinaire n° 7. p.11

(2) O.P. p. 168

-which gives an impression of unified movement, and is continued in the lines 10-13 and again taken up at the end of the poem. In fact it seems to us that the lines which have this fragmentary or destructive function are not different from various lines which have quoted in our analysis of the poems of "Alcools", the function of which is to take the reader by surprise and prevent his imagination from constructing from a poem a coherent picture of reality which conforms to his own experience. For if a line such as-

"Voilà une jolie jeune fille parmi les jeunes Turinaises"
-present a picture which is perfectly realisable to the imagination of any reader, even one who has never seen Turin or its inhabitants, its context is such that it is the irrelevance of the image to what preceded it or follows it that is important. And an image such as-

"Le pauvre jeune homme se mouchait dans sa cravate blanche"
-bears the instantly recognisable stamp of the shock images as we have seen it in "Le Voyageur", for example -

"Sonneries électriques des gares chant des moissonneuses"(1)
-even though the content of the two lines is quite different.

Now, according to Lockyerbie's reading of the poem, the opposing movement is that of a reconstruction of reality by the poet, so that the end of the poem -

"Du rouge au vert tout le jaune se meurt
Paris Vancouver Hyères Maintenon New York et les Antilles
La fenêtre s'ouvre comme une orange
Le beau fruit de la lumière"

(1) O.P. p. 79

-is "Une seule volonté ... réunissant tout ce qui avait été fragmenté". (1) And in this "réorganisation supérieure" of the world the simultaneous presence of past and present (the pun on Hyères Maintenon is inescapable), here and there is, or seems to us no different from the reorganisation of the world which is attempted, and in our opinion achieved, in such poems as "Les Fiançailles", "Zone", "Le Voyageur", and others. The fact that in this poem we are dealing with the key image of light, which being white contains all the colours of the spectrum (1), does not basically alter the fact that the poet had previously attempted a reconstruction of the universe in other poems, and achieved it without recourse to the image of light, which is no doubt due to the influence of Delaunay (2). We must, however agree with Lockerbie's contention that this reorganisation of the world is achieved in "Les Fenêtres", and moreover, it is perhaps of a different order, even if only slightly, to that of his other poems.

The crucial point here seems to us to be that the images of shock by means of which Apollinaire destroys reality have no dimension of reality of their own in the way that images such as-

(1) Cf. "Blancs rayons de lumière" -Liens O.P. p. 167

(2) An examination of Delaunay's writings of the period (Du Cubisme à l'Art abstrait) and his corrections of Apollinaire's articles and other texts on his (Delaunay's) ideas leaves no doubt on the matter, but there is no space here to develop this.

"A la fin les mensonges ne me font plus peur

C'est la lune qui cuit comme un oeuf sur le plat

Le collier de gouttes d'eau va parer la noyée" (1)

-have and are meant to have, as we have already seen. This brings us to the consideration of these lines (2-9 and 14-18 in particular) in more detail. According to at least one of the anecdotes(2) concerning the composition of this poem Apollinaire used phrases chosen at random by himself and his friends to make up at least part, if not all of the poem. It is to be doubted, in view not only of Delaunay's version of the matter, but also of Lockerbie's analysis which reveals the coherent and well thought out structure of the poem, that Apollinaire took no pains at all in the composition and organisation of his poem. So, if, in fact, parts of this poem do consist of random remarks, whether chosen by Apollinaire or simply offered by his friends, it is most likely that these parts of the poem are the parts to which are assigned the destructive function.

If this is so, then the lines in question are meant to be totally objective representations of a reality that is not that of the poet's world of imagination, but a part of the universal domain. This is surely what Lockerbie intends to indicate in his reference to them as "bribes de conversation". It is true that the reference to the mythical birds, phoenix, rather betrays the hand of Apollinaire in the composition of these lines, and moreover few, if any, of the

(1) O.P. p. 134

(2) That told by André Billy, for example.

of the lines present an ordinary image or scene which might have been observed by anyone; but their objectivity lies in their random presentation; their incoherence which has been linked to that of juxtaposed fragments of many different conversations, only partially overheard. And it is this that differentiates them from most of the simple surprise images of the poems^{of} "Alcools". Thus Lockerbie concludes -

"Jusque-là, dans les grands poèmes d'Alcools, c'était dans les profondeurs de la conscience, dans les rêveries et le long vagabondage lyrique, qu'il avait cherché l'unicité de son moi. Dans "Les Fenêtres" toute cette force de rêverie est projetée au dehors, et trouve sa satisfaction dans la création d'un assemblage de fragments qui, dans une grande mesure, semble jouir de sa vie propre." (1)

And we would agree with him in this respect, but we cannot go on as he does to say that "Les Fenêtres" -

"concilie ainsi, par un tour de force étonnant, toute l'aspiration lyrique et spirituelle des meilleurs poèmes d'Apollinaire, et toute la complexité des nouvelles formes picturales qui avaient excité son admiration." For even if we assume that Apollinaire has found here a literary equivalent of Delaunay's plastic experiments, we cannot say that in making his images of shock more objective, more external, he has succeeded in surpassing the achievements of the great poems^{of} "Alcools". Our criticism is precisely that by depriving his shock images of a powerful reality of their own, Apollinaire has weakened his ability to convince us that the

(1) Lockerbie "Les Fenêtres" in R.L.M. 1968 p. 18-19

artist is the creator of his universe. The flaw which renders this poem less effective a demonstration of the power of the artist to reshape the world in his own image, is the separation of the destructive and creative functions of the imagery. Thus, to take only one of the most recent examples we have dealt ^{with} in this study, the line-

"Cordes faites de cris"

-at one and the same time destroys the reality of cords as we know it and substitutes for it the reality of links or bonds, which is the reality of the poem.

Significantly, Apollinaire's reorganisation of the universe in such a way that the dimension of time is present as well as place depends upon a pun which has less force and creative power than such a pun as that already discussed in "La Tzigane"-

"Nous lui dîmes adieu et puis

Et de ce puits sortit l'Espérance" (1)

Whether it is due to the influence of Delaunay, or whether it is simply that Apollinaire was attempting to explore further the possibilities of violence in literature, it seems to us that in this poem he is less successful in his translation of the role of the poet as creator than in "Les Fiançailles". The dimension that is lacking from this poem is the dimension of surreality which he achieves so successfully in the major poems of "Alcools" written after 1906.

We pass on to an examination of "Lundi rue Christine" in which we shall attempt to show that Apollinaire was attempting much the same thing that he attempted in "Les Fenêtres", but in a more modest perspective. It is of this poem, above all others, that the phrase

(1) O.P. p.99

"poeme-conversation" is used and it is immediately obvious to the reader why this should be so. -

"La mère de la concierge et la concierge laisseront tout
passer
Si tu es un homme tu m'accompagneras ce soir
Il suffirait qu'un type maintînt la porte cochère
Pendant que l'autre monterait" (1)

In these three lines we are so obviously reading fragments of conversation that there is no dimension of surprise left. Certainly we are a long way from the surreal image which creates its own universe.

It must not be supposed that this was a new direction imparted to the poetry of Apollinaire by the experiments of the painters who surrounded him; for if it is true that these fragments of conversation are meant to be the literary equivalent of the fragmented planes of cubist painting, or the simultaneity of Delaunay's canvases, and this is by no means sure, it is also true that Apollinaire had been interested since his youth in composing poems from overheard remarks and sounds. The poem "Acousmate" (2) bears adequate testimony to this desire -

"Paix sur la terre aux hommes de bonne volonté
Les maris voudraient agir l'outil n'a pas de manche
Sur les doigts de cet homme on voit des taches d'encre
Les hommes et les FEMMES tous insermentés"

- as does the following note copied probably from a dictionary into

(1) O.P. p. 180

(2) O.P. p. 671. This is undoubtedly an early poem - cf. note O.P. p. 1148 & also O.P. p. 513.

an early notebook-

"acousmate : "bruit de voix ou d'instruments qu'on croit entendre dans l'air" (1) That is not to say that the influence of his friends counted for nothing in his return to this idea, but it does, of course, forestall the criticism that this poem is simply a literary imitation of certain developments in the visual arts, and as such shows a lack of originality on the part of Apollinaire.

Of course it would be extremely easy to be bored reading just any fragments of any conversations, so Apollinaire has taken care to find amusing or intriguing snippets which hold our attention, and even inserts ironically the line-

"Ça a l'air de rimer"

-where there is no rhyme at all. The surprise element is not entirely absent from the poem as we can see in lines such as the following-

"Six glaces s'y dévisagent toujours"

And the following line must sound ironic to the ears of any reader who has not grasped the principle on which the poem is constructed-

"Je crois que nous allons nous embrouiller encore davantage"

"Lundi Rue Christine" is, then an attempt to give a portrait of a place by noting down remarks overheard there at a certain time. It may be argued that the result could apply equally to almost any street on almost any day of the week, but this is not really the point. The point of this poem is that the poet is not really its author- the words are not his words and the selection of them is left mainly to chance, if not entirely.

(1) Cf. M. Décaudin-presentation of Calligrammes in the edition of the Club du Meilleur Livre, & also Le Flaneur des Deux rives, n°4

The poet, in other words, is attempting to endow his poetry with objectivity that is due to the action of chance. We have no way of knowing, obviously, how much the poet did actually leave to chance, many of the remarks in the poem seem too amusing not to have been deliberately chosen. But in that case the poem may well be the equivalent of the "objet trouvé" and as such a demonstration that the power of the poet to recreate the universe is such that simply by pointing to an object or a remark, he is focussing our attention upon it and thus, as it were, giving a real existence to it. However, as the title indicates, Apollinaire is not here trying to focus our attention simply on the statements which he has noted in his poem, but rather on the whole that he is presenting to us. In other words, Rue Christine on Monday consists of all these diverse and unrelated sounds- or rather this is our aural experience of it. In this light we may say that this kind of poetry is a far stricter imitation of reality than many other that Apollinaire has written up to this time.

One cannot but think of the lines from the prologue to "Les Mamelles de Tirésias" (1)

"Le grand déploiement de notre art moderne

Mariant souvent sans lien apparent comme dans la vie

Les sons les gestes les couleurs les cris les bruits"

-and of the lines from - "L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes"-

"Beaucoup de ces vérités n'avaient pas été examinées. Il suffit de les dévoiler pour causer une surprise".(2)

(1) O.P. p. 881

(2) O.C. T.3 p. 906

Is this not what Apollinaire is doing in this poem? He is pointing to something that has been under our noses all our lives and surprising us by doing so. His "Lundi rue Christine" is an amalgam of sounds and phrases which we are surprised to find juxtaposed in a poem, but which we accept in life without paying any attention. (1)

It is inconceivable that Apollinaire should have created such a poem without first having gone through the evolution which we have indicated in "Alcools". But it seems to us that this poem is not so much a poem of violence as a poem of simple surprise. (Nothing can shock where there are no conventions left to break, as in this poem.) The difference lies in the fact that in "Lundi Rue Christine" we are surprised by the existence of something which we normally overlook, whereas in poems such as "Liens", "Le Voyageur", "Zone", "Les Fiançailles", the poet is substituting ~~xxx~~ another reality for that which we know, and he does this by destroying the latter at the same time as he creates the former, so that the violence of these poems is that of an experience which is not only thrust upon us, instead^u of being offered to us, but also one which contradicts our knowledge of the world.

The link between these two kinds of poetry is there for us to see, but it seems to us that the basic pre-occupation of the author in the poems discussed in this section is with what Lockerbie has called the "poème-crée" (2) :

(1) This is called an "objectal" quality by Renaud (Lecture d'Apollinaire; Ed. L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, 1969 p. 320 & note) who compares it to Duchamps' "ready-mades".

(2) Op. cit. passim. This is clearly also supported by Renaud's analysis (op.cit.). Unfortunately Renaud does not seem to have^{been aware} at the time of writing, of Lockerbie's study -or at last he makes no mention of it.

the autonomous, external, poetic object as opposed to the true creation of the imagination that we find in the great poems of "Alcools", and, as we shall see, in the later poems of "Calligrammes".

CHAPTER THREE : SECTION THREE

ONDES (B)

In this section we propose to analyse the poems "Arbre", "Sur les Prophéties", "Le Musicien de Saint-Merry" and "Un fantôme de Nuées", leaving aside "A travers l'Europe" for reasons which we shall make clear when we come to deal with it, also leaving out "Les Collines" as this poem belongs to a later period, which we shall fully demonstrate in the relevant section, and the calligrammes themselves which we intend to discuss in one section for all of them. The four poems which we shall be discussing in this section, then, were published between March 1913 and May 1914. Unlike the poems of "Alcools", most of the poems in "Calligrammes" were published fairly soon after their date of composition, and so we consider it appropriate to deal with these four poems together yet separately from "Les Fenêtres" et "Lundi Rue Christine" as none is an attempt at a "poème-conversation". (1)

We begin with the poem "Arbre" which was in fact published in "Le Gay Sçavoir" before "Alcools" had finally been published. From the beginning we find in this poem the same lack of connection between lines and the same apparently arbitrary arrangement of images which we have shown to be the trait most characteristic of the techniques

(1) Renaud (op.cit. p. 343 et seq.) does make a tenuous attempt to describe "Arbre" as a kind of "poème-conversation" but then recognises the essential differences.

of violence in Apollinaire's poetry from 1907 on -

"Tu chantes avec les autres tandis que les phonographes galopent
 Où sont les aveugles où s'en sont-ils allés?
 La seule feuille que j'aie cueillie s'est changée en plusieurs
 mirages
 Ne m'abandonnez pas parmi cette foule de femmes au marché
 Ispahan s'est fait un ciel de carreaux émaillés de bleu
 Et je remonte avec vous une route aux environs de Lyon." (1)

There are several elements of the above passage which immediately claim our attention; firstly, the lines are all strongly end-stopped, making of each a definite unit; secondly, this isolation of the lines is carried on in the imagery; thirdly, the presence in the last two lines, of two place names which recalls the ideas of simultaneity of "Les Fenêtres"; fourthly, the change of person from the "tu" of line one to the "je" of the last line. All of these features we have already seen in other poems. We note also the metamorphoses of the third line which may suggest to us that the following lines are the mirages in question. This line is also the only line in the opening verse, or paragraph, which offers any connection with the title of the poem.

Let us now examine these lines in detail. The first line carries both a note of humour (in the use of the word "galopent") and a note of modernism (in the introduction of the recently invented "phonograph" or gramophone). These notes combined give us an awareness of a scene which the poet is describing (in scant detail), that to us, in the second half of the twentieth century is rendered more vividly by the "galopent" than by the modernistic impact of "phonographes" especially as the latter term is now little used. Nevertheless we must attempt/

(1) O.P. p. 178

to imagine the effect of the line at the time of its composition and it seems fair to us to say that it is a kind of banner warning that the poet is modern above all else in much the same way that the mention of pylons was in the poetry of the twenties in England. Would it then be going too far to say that the poet is using the word "phonographes" for its shock value? It is certain that there were many people who read poetry at the time who would have considered it a daring modernism, but perhaps most of those liable to read Apollinaire's poetry would not think so- they would be more likely to react to the use of "galopent", the more so since the "galop" was a popular dance at that time. They would in all probability find it mildly surprising and funny, in exactly the same way as the much earlier description of a gramophone-

"Un phonographe énamouré pour dix pfennigs

Chanta l'amour à quatre voix de chanteurs morts "(1)

-which in fact is probably more effective in rendering the wonderful qualities of the new invention.

Perhaps the effect of modernism for which Apollinaire was trying here has, paradoxically, been preserved by the fact that he has used a word which has become obsolete to describe an object which has become commonplace and so our attention is drawn to something which otherwise might have passed as unnoticed as, say, a reference to steel in the poetry of Pope. This allows us to see clearly one of the dangers inherent in the desire to be modern, especially when this is coupled with a desire to be aggressively so-

(1) O.P. p. 531



the poem has been overtaken by the development of science. Apollinaire was of course aware of this as we can see from the following quotation which was written some years later than the poem here under discussion_

"O mon amie hâte-toi

Crains qu'un jour un train ne t'émeuve

Plus"

(1)

To return to the passage under consideration, is there not, in the use of the pronoun "tu" an almost automatic sign to the reader that the poet is dealing with a memory? Certainly the poet in using "tu" is referring to himself (2) and this immediately shows a certain distance between the self writing the poem and the self present in the image—a distance which is closely paralleled by that of memory, and there are precedents enough in Apollinaire's ^o poems to support our assumption, although one cannot state categorically that the first line is in fact something remembered rather than something imagined or even experienced at the moment of writing. In this context the next line may seem to relate to the first—were the others in the first line perhaps blind, either really or metaphorically? But if this is so it is a connection which arises solely from the juxtaposition of the two lines and nothing else. Even if it is so, it is a most tenuous connection and we are forced to submit to the

(1) O.P. p. 310

(2) Renaud (op.cit. pp. 343 et seq.) makes a case for this being Cendrars. His interpretation seems reasonable, but it seems to us that the lines that may refer to Cendrars or his activities—except the allusion to the "prose"—really integrate into the poem in another way.

disparity and the illogical quality of the passage.

The third line, however, offers us an image which, allied to the title, might give us a definite point of view with regard to the structure and style of the poem-

"La seule feuille que j'aie cueillie s'est changée en plusieurs images" .

The poem is entitled "Arbre" and here we have a reference to the picking of a leaf. The action is not, however, simple, for the leaf undergoes several possible interpretations of this- we may see the trees referred to as Poetry and therefore the leaf as the way in which the poet has chosen to write, the ideas of metamorphosis and illusion fitting this interpretation very well; or, we may see the trees as the tree of evolution and therefore the leaf as the poet's experience of the world (in its place in the history of humanity) and again the ideas of illusion and metamorphosis are in harmony; or, seeing the first three lines in very close connection with one another, we may think that the tree is this poem itself and that the leaf is the initial image of the poem which is then changed into the others, these being only illusory; this last interpretation has the merit of offering an explanation of the word "seule" that is internal. Of course it is by no means unlikely that all three interpretations given above are included simultaneously in the imagery of the poem and its title. (1)

Let us consider the three last lines of the paragraph in the light of all these interpretations. If the first interpretation is correct, then the images given in these lines are examples of the illusions or mirages of the poet's style, each image in turn destroying its predecessor and therefore revealing it to be an

(1) Not the least weakness in Renaud's (op.cit.) interpretation is the fact that he gives no consideration to the poem's title

an illusion . If it is the second interpretation which is the most relevant to the poem, then these lines are memories of the poet (events or things which he has experienced) and again the way which they succeed each other without apparent bond between them is evidence of the illusory nature of experience and memory. In the case of the third interpretation, it is necessary to suppose that the first line calls forth the second and that the third line is a commentary on this process which is continued in the last few lines. Clearly none of these three possibilities excludes the other two; in fact all three possibilities fit together very well.

The first line of the next paragraph lends support to the idea that we are dealing with memories-

"Je n'ai pas oublié le son de la clochette d'un marchand"
de coco d'autrefois"

-and the content of the line is a comment on the way in which memory functions, the negative construction underlining the absurdity of the fact that the poet remembers still this detail of the past (probably childhood). The next line, however, introduces a new dimension-

"J'entends déjà le son aigre de cette voix à venir"

-for the line seems to imply that the sound of the voice is that of the merchant in the previous line, and therefore that past and present are the same thing, or, at least are simultaneously present, in the poem. This is immediately modified by the next line which continues the grammatical construction-

"Du camarade qui se promènera avec toi en Europe"

- and identifies the voice, but in so doing, because of the relationship established between the first and the second lines, suggest that the "camarade" and the merchant are one and the same person and therefore the past and the future are simultaneously present in the poem.

The final line -

"Tout en restant en Amérique"

-adds the possibility of simultaneous presence in different places which we may consider was already hinted at in the last two lines of the first paragraph. Again this is all in harmony with both the function of memory and the creation of a poem.

The next paragraph beginning as it does with the evocation of a child, is also consistent with the idea that the poem is composed of memories. Moreover the imagery of this paragraph definitely intends ^{to} evoke a strong emotional reaction from the reader, and it does this by juxtaposition -

"Un enfant

Un veau dépauillé pendu à l'étal

Un enfant"

The unreality of the preceding lines is suddenly interrupted by the savage vision of a butchered calf which by its proximity to the word "un enfant" becomes the child itself. The poet is here combining the effects of ^{the} technique of violence with those of violent imagery - that is to say that by stripping his phrase of any word of comparison or any superfluous expression the poet forces us to accept the identification of the child and the butchered calf, and by choosing the butchered calf as the other half of the juxtaposition the poet is seeking to make his image as repugnant as possible, for he does

not limit himself to describing the calf as one on a butcher's stall he goes further and underlines that its stomach and entrails have been removed. Thus what renders the sight of a butchered calf more acceptable to us in reality, i.e. lack of entrails, heart, etc. in the context of identification with a child renders it more horrible; but still the poet does not refer to the act of real physical violence, to the actual butchering of the calf, in order to obtain his effect.

The next line drops very quickly from the emotional peak of the beginning of the paragraph -

"Et cette banlieue de sable autour d'une pauvre ville au
fond de l'est"

- but inevitably some of the sadness which the previous image induces is carried over into this one. (This may be even more so if one sees in this line a reference to the town of Stavelot where Apollinaire and his brother were abandoned by their mother without any money - but this is not apparent from the context of the poem). The next line has a gentle note of humour, perhaps even irony (1) -

"Un douanier se tenait là comme un ange"

But this becomes rather more savage in the following line -

"A la porte d'un misérable paradis"

- which suggests that there is no goal worth travelling to. We cannot escape the similarities with "Le Voyageur" in this poem. Apart from the construction which might lead one to think that the two poems were composed at exactly the same period, there are the

(1) Is Apollinaire thinking of the Douanier Rousseau, and his portrait of the poet with his muse (Marie Laurencin)? In which case perhaps the "miserable paradis" is what he thought of the immortality which being painted by Rousseau offered him. Cf. "Inscription pour le tombeau du peintre Henri Rousseau Douanier" O.P. p. 654, which was published only one month after this poem.

images of travel which are perhaps implicit in the lines ending the first paragraph, in the naming of places, and which are given a prominent place in the second and now the third ; for even if one were to overlook the idea of a voyage undertaken to the "ville de l'est", the final line of the paragraph can leave no doubt, and it by association reflects upon the preceding lines-

"Et ce voyageur épileptique écumait dans la salle d'attente des premières" . Thus, here just as in "Le Voyageur" we have the ideas of childhood and journeys associated with pain.

The next paragraph begins in a very cryptic way-

"Engoulevent Blaireau"

Et la Taupe-Ariane"

-and if the preceding paragraph gave some kind of emotional reference point to which we could refer the varied imagery, this paragraph opens in a way which deprives us of any hold upon the poem at all. Why should one associate a nightjar and a badger? Perhaps because they are both nocturnal creatures? Perhaps because there is a similarity in their colouring? The differences between the two are surely far greater than any possible resemblances. And what are they doing here, in the poem? The next line is even more mysterious. There are two possible meanings of "Ariane", one of which may offer us some slender clue to the reason for its presence. "Ariane can of course mean the aryan lands, the Eastern part of the old Persian empire, including Afghanistan, and this is where the town of Ispahan is situated. Is this, then, another reference to a place and hence to a journey? If so, what associations are there with "La Taupe"? Clearly "Ariane" must mean Ariadne as well as the

Aryan lands, and so perhaps the connection lies in the fact that the mole is a constructor of labyrinth ~~and~~ Ariane was the one who helped Theseus to find a way out of the labyrinth in Crete ~~by~~ holding one end of a piece^{of} string which Theseus paid out as he went to see the Minotaur. (Possibly these are images of the poetic process).

So, perhaps the poet is dealing in synthesized opposites here - the swift and free-flying bird is juxtaposed with the stolid, burrowing badger; the blind and ugly mole with the beautiful Ariadne who represents freedom. Is, this, then, another dimension of simultaneity? (1) The next paragraph offers no clue, but is another abrupt change of imagery and tone-

"Nous avions loué deux coupés dans le transsibérien

Tour à tour nous dormions le voyageur en bijouterie et ~~moi~~.

Mais celui qui veillait ne cachait point un revolver armé"

These lines are a direct reference to the "Prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jeanne de France" of Blaise Cendrars, but what is their place, what their function in Apollinaire's poem? They continue the theme of travel and show a different aspect of it. Turn about, the two people travelling keep watch-the danger as well as the ~~romance~~ of distant lands is present here. But this is not the sole function of these lines. As we have said they refer directly to a poem by Cendrars although they are not a quotation; can we not then see them

- (1) It is certainly true that this poem is clearly much more organized than "Lundi Rue Christine" and that much of the structure seems to depend on the pairing of opposites.

them as another aspect of simultaneity (1). If past, present and future, here and there can all be brought into the same plane within a poem, why should the poet not bring together two different poems as both are part of the corpus of Poetry which has a past present and future, a here and there in the same way that the existence of any man may be said to have. This is surely consistent with the idea that the tree of the title is the tree of Poetry.

The next paragraph begins with a line which might have been taken straight from "Zone" -

"Tu t'es promené à Leipzig avec une femme mince déguisée en homme"

- and the following line sounds like a bitter aside which has the effect of varying the tone and the emotions evoked in the reader.

Clearly in these two lines Apollinaire is looking back into his past and making a comment on his experience, even if it is only a rapid aside, and so the third line of this paragraph -

"Et il ne faudrait pas oublier les légendes"

- may be seen both as a reference to legends about Apollinaire's own past as well as to the past in general; or perhaps the legends are the comments which he wishes to place under the mental pictures which he conjures up in the poem. (Certainly we are much more aware of the fact that he may have been referring to legends about his own past if we are familiar with the poet's biography.)

The following line begins with a name which is that of a minor

(1) Renaud (op.cit. p. 332) points out that Apollinaire might be returning the compliment Cendrars paid him by quoting him in the "Prose".

personnage in the "Roman de la Rose" - a witch who controlled men's dream -

"Dame-Abonde dans un tramway la nuit au fond d'un quartier désert"

- but situates that figure in a very modern context which again recalls the tone and setting of "Zone".

"Je voyais une chasse tandis que je montais

Et l'ascenseur s'arrêtait à chaque étage"

These lines offer us no clue as to the identity of "Dame-Abonde", in fact they make her appearance a vision such as might have been momentarily revealed to the poet and then hidden again as the lift doors opened and then closed. What is the hunt which the poet saw? And did he see it as he was boarding the tram or as he was going up the lift? Do these three lines perhaps represent a legend which Apollinaire is creating? In which case we find ourselves faced with a poet as a maker of legends which is not an uncommon role for modern poets to adopt. In fact the principal impact of these lines as with much of the poem, is in the mystery they create - a mystery to which we feel the poet holds the key. Other than the theme of travel there is nothing which the reader can find in the poem as a unifying structure except the opposites which are largely geographical and it is surely fair to assume that the poet intended this to be so. Often his images seem to be a comment upon the structure of the poem itself, as in the case of the third line of the poem -

"La seule feuille que j'aie cueillie s'est changée en plusieurs mirages"

- and also in the case of the last line of this paragraph -

"L'ascenseur s'arrêtait à chaque étage"

The poet, if this is the case, seems to be saying that the

writing of the poem and perhaps even of poetry in general, consists of a series of related yet disjointed images such as the views seen at different levels of the same building from a lift stopping at every floor. This interpretation would make of this very obscure poem another "art poétique", in which case it seems to us that the poem is a relative failure in comparison with "Liens" for example. (The poem is clearly too much the deliberate result of an author's hand to aspire to the status of "poème-crée" like "Lundi Rue Christine".)

It is possible that Apollinaire wished to create a poem which would consist of images related to each other principally by the fact that they are all part of the same poem, in the same way the leaves and the branches of a tree are related principally to each other through the tree. Clearly, this entails his pushing a little further the ideas developed in "Les Fiançailles", as he was doing in other directions in other poems such as "Les Fenêtres" and "Lundi Rue Christine" about this time.

It seems to us, however, that ⁱⁿ this poem, Apollinaire is allowing his imagery too much liberty; so that as the lift doors open and close, we are by no means sure that we are still in the same building! The surprise that we feel on reading many of the lines is much less effective in this poem where there is no unifying thread; it is as though the trunk of the tree has been removed and we are left with the leaves and branches. Let us, however, finish our analysis of the rest of the poem before we conclude about the poet's intentions. The next paragraph gives us a series of situations in which the poet finds the same image re^ucurring, there being no link whatsoever between any of the situations and this being the poet's

intention, we deduce that he is obsessed by the image. But whose image? It could well be his own as he is already almost certainly referring to himself in the second person singular in this poem; or it could be the image of someone whom he has loved and who has left him, a common enough theme in the poetry of Apollinaire.

This obsessive returning of the same image is interrupted sharply by the line -

"Ce beau nègre en acier"

-a strange and inexplicable image which might have come from a science-fiction novel of the future. Surely this is not the image which haunts the poet. Or is it? Might-

"Ce beau nègre en acier"

-be the plate from which an etching has to be printed? And might that etching not be a portrait of a woman whom the poet has lost and whose image returns to haunt him wherever he looks? Or the image could be the poet's own. Thus this mysterious line might well correspond to something quite concrete in the poet's mind although its function is principally to mystify the reader and to preserve the unknown quantity, the concealed identity of the other or self that the poet sees everywhere.

The poem ends with a passage which contains lines that would not have been out of place in "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé"-

" Tout est plus triste qu'autrefois

Tous les dieux terrestres vieillissent

L' univers se ^Ipeint par ta voix"

The note of elegiac sadness would seem to suggest that there is a lost love involved, but there is probably more also. The poem ends

with two lines which recall the "acteurs inhumains claires bêtes nouvelles" of "Le Brasier" -

"Et des êtres nouveaux surgissent

Trois par trois"

There are many interpretations which one might put upon these new beings, not least among them that, coming in threes they are creatures for whom love has been reinvented. They also reflect back on the preceding lines and lead us to see that the poet was not merely being mysterious when he concealed the references to a lost love, but was also putting something else in to the image - his own past self.

This poem seems to us to be rather confused in comparison with much of the poetry which Apollinaire had written since 1907. It is not simply that he was attempting something more ambitious here and was forced into obscurity by the desire to compress as many levels of meaning as possible into as few words as possible. The poem is vague and confused because it seems to be about almost everything that was in Apollinaire's mind at the time, and by removing the key to the poem, which is his own experience, Apollinaire has left the reader with a poem which he feels has a meaning but which he cannot penetrate. In other words, what Apollinaire has done is not to give independence to his imagery, but rather to remove the central point of reference which is his own experience, and try to make of what is left the imagery of a poem. This would seem to us to be a further exploration of the techniques of violence which in this instance fail. It fails because after we have submitted to the shock and surprise which the disparity of the imagery and tone

cause us, we are left with no amalgamation of the diverse elements such as we experience in , say, "Le Voyageur".

We pass on now to "Sur les prophéties", our principal interest in this poem being that one of the characteristics of Apollinaire's new poetry, from "Les Fiançailles" to "Les Collines" is the claim to be able to foresee the future in terms of the embodiment of the imagination. Since Apollinaire is dealing here with prophecies of all kinds there is a certain interest in examining what he has to say about them.

The poem falls into two parts, the first of which is more or less an enumeration of the various ways in which fortune-tellers and such like people claim to be able to see the future. The second part, addressed to André Billy, is a justification of the claim that the future is visible to us; justification, that is to say, rather than demonstration. According to the poet, interpreting the future is simply-

"..... une façon d'observer la nature

Et d'interpréter la nature

Qui est très légitime" (1)

This statement is at variance with what Apollinaire says elsewhere about the role of a poet as a prophet, for if we examine his statements on this matter we find that the poet foretells the future by imagining something which science later invents. We might even say that he is dealing in self-fulfilling prophecies; for example his theory that Icarus is the fruit of the imagination of a poet later given substance by the invention of the aeroplane- it is clear to us that both Icarus (as a symbol of man who can fly) and the aeroplane are the products of Man's desire to fly, and that moreover the ima-

(1) O.P. P.187.

gination can more readily fulfil any desire than can the conscious mind.

This poem then should not be considered as offering any really relevant clarification of Apollinaire's theories of prophecy as they are set out in, for example, "Les Collines". The one other point of interest which there is for us in this poem, is that there is no attempt to create a prophetic image. We think of the "acteurs inhumains" from "Le Brasier" and of the vision of "Les Fiançailles" which both offer certain affinities to the case of a poem dealing, or purporting to deal, with knowledge of the future; and we shall later see that the climax of "Les Collines" consists of just such a sequence of images. In all these cases Apollinaire depends upon the techniques of violence, but as we have observed in our analysis of "Arbre", of the "poèmes-conversation" that he was to a certain extent attempting to go beyond these techniques, might we not see in his failure to exploit them here a lack of a sense of direction in his writing? We have already quoted Apollinaire as saying that his "poèmes-conversation" were a new departure in poetry, and at the same time he was experimenting with his calligrammes; it is therefore clear that he did not feel that he had achieved everything which he wished to in his exploitation of the techniques of violence, although neither the calligrammes nor the "poème-créés" as Loukerbie calls it would have been conceivable without the primary dislocation of the poetic structure that is exploited in such poems as "Les Fiançailles".

The two remaining poems which we wish to consider in this section have in common an element of narrative form and an element of

narrative form and an element of fantasy and whimsy which is not without its charm, but both seem to us to be relatively minor pieces in comparison with the ambition of "Les Fenêtres" or the calligrammes, particularly "Lettre-Océan", as we shall see.

"Le Musicien de Saint-Merry" bears certain resemblances to "Cortège" and begins with a line which recalls one passage from "Les Fiançailles".

"J'ai enfin le droit de saluer des êtres que je ne connais pas" (1)

-recalls the line from the fifth section of "Les Fiançailles"-

"Et je souris des êtres que je n'ai pas créés"

-and perhaps the comparison is not inappropriate, as we shall see.

The notes to this poem in the Pléiade edition give two anecdotes concerning Apollinaire's visit to the church of Saint-Merry each of which suggests that this process of allowing the imagination to be stimulated by place was quite important to Apollinaire. Perhaps it is to the fact that the poem owes its inspiration to the church and the atmosphere of the quarter, that the first line is due. The creatures whom the poet greets and whom he has not created, in fact does not know, are people seen in and around the church. Thus the first verse of the poem-

"J'ai enfin le droit de saluer des êtres que je ne connais
pas
Ils passent devant moi et s'accumulent au loin
Tandis que tout ce que j'en vois m'est inconnu
Et leur espoir n'est pas moins fort que le mien"

-appears as an attempt similar to that of the "poèmes-conversation" to create a poem which owes little to the personality of the poet.

(1) O.P. p. 188.

In fact, the next verse puts a rather different perspective on this consideration -

"Je ne chante pas ce monde ni les autres

Je chante toutes les possibilités de moi-même hors de ce monde
et des astres

Je chante la joie d'errer et le plaisir d'en mourir"

From these lines it is clear that the poet's right to greet those whom he does not know arises from his complete confidence that his poetry springs from his own imagination rather than from the outside world. It would seem that the poet considers that the time which he foresaw, or rather wished for in "Les Fiançailles" has come -

"Mais si le temps venait où l'ombre enfin solide

Se multiplierait en réalisant la diversité formelle de mon amour
J'admèrerais mon ouvrage " (1)

Thus the fact that the poet may have seen something in the area round the church of Saint-Merry which seems to his friends to have some relation to the theme and imagery of the poem, is, in fact, of very little relevance. Apollinaire himself is stating quite categorically that his poetry is the product of his imagination, and therefore that whatever external features are incorporated into his poetry are completely transformed by his imagination.

If we insist on this point it is because, far from being another attempt at creating a poem external to the personality of the poet, and consequently a parallel to "Lundi Rue Christine", this poem is a product of the poetic imagination in the same sense that the

(1) O.P. p. 132

latter poems of "Alcools" as well as the latter poems of "Calligrammes" are. This seems to us to be an important modification of S.I. Lockerie's division of the poetry of "Calligrammes" into two periods, that of the years 1913-1914 and that of 1916-1918,(1) but at the same time it is the confirmation of both Lockerie's hypothesis and our own, that the eventual poetic goal of the poetry of "Calligrammes" is the same for all the poems in the volume, even if the routes taken, are often considerably different from one another.

The tone of the lines which follow the last passage quoted is that of whimsical fantasy into which the poet injects only one note of real mystery-

"Homme Ah! Ariane"

- in this description of the mysterious piper. But even this is not too difficult to interpret (the women, like Ariadne by Theseus, are being led away to be later abandoned) and so cannot really be considered as an image of surprise.

However, there is an abrupt change of construction and of tone following the line-

"Il s'en allait terriblement"

-and the poem expands to take in not only a much wider region of Paris than the area already mentioned, but also parts of Germany as well-

"Puis ailleurs

A quelle heure un train partira-t-il pour Paris

oooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

Ailleurs

Elle traverse un pont qui relie Bonn à Beuel et disparaît
à travers Pützchen"

(1) Cf. "Le rôle de l'imagination dans Calligrammes" by S.I. Lockerie in R.L.M. series on Apollinaire n° 5, 1966.

The scale and structure of the poem are radically altered here and the effect of this is to introduce a new dimension to certain of the lines in the first half of the poem. What we have read so far is a description of a kind of pied piper in a certain area of Paris- suddenly the scene is transformed, but not to any definite place; the poet simply introduces the dimension of "ailleurs". Then comes the introduction of specific places - an archipelago near Indonesia and the former capital of the Belgian Congo - but most important here are the lines -

"A ce moment

o o o o o o

En même temps"

- Apollinaire is introducing his ideas of simultaneity; the poem re-assembles events taking place all over the world at the same time. The poet also adds a note of mystery in the line -

"Mission catholique de Bôma qu'as-tu fait du sculpteur"

(might there [^]not be here some reference to a piece of African sculpture which the poet knows and which he considers to be in a style lost to those Africans who have been converted to Christianity?)

There is also the question of the identity of the woman in the line -

"Elle traverse un pont qui relie Bonn à Beuel et disparaît

à travers Pützchen"

as the poet makes no attempt to give us any sort of answer to these mysteries, it is clear that he is not trying to present a series of parallel stories or events, but rather is using these brief views of other places in much the same way as the "Roi-Lune" listens to the

sounds of different parts of the world in his cavern, by playing the keys of his wonderful magic instrument. (1) But there is no need for us to look outside the poem for a "musicien"- can we not see that the young man playing the flute is the poet himself and that the tune which he is playing is the poem, his music being an imaginative experience of the world which allows him to use notes from different harmonies, if we may use such an analogy to describe the different zones of the world. Consider the lines -

"Il s'arrêta au coin de la rue Saint-Martin

Jouant l'air que je chante et que j'ai inventé"

-are these not sufficient a hint that if the flautist is not the poet himself, then he is at least the poet's creature? Furthermore there is the warning given by the poet in the second verse that he is not writing about the external world but about the possibilities of himself.

Unlimited magical powers are not, however, what the poet is claiming; indeed he immediately reminds himself and us of some of his limitations-

"Dans un autre quartier

Rivalise donc ô poète avec les étiquettes des parfumeurs

-although one cannot be oblivious to the note of irony that is present here. Clearly the poet is alluding to the powers of suggestion which the names of certain perfumes have for their users if not for everyone. And he, in a few words, or a few lines is trying to suggest as much as possible of the feeling of "ailleurs".

The next lines present a kind of summing up of what has been done by the poets and end on a call for unity among the avant-garde(?)

(1) Cf. "Le Poète Assassiné" pp. 129-136.

which reminds us of "Liens"-

"En somme 8 rieurs vous n'avez pas tiré grand-chose
des hommes

Et à peine avez-vous extrait un peu de graisse de leur
misère
Mais nous qui môrons de vivre loin l'un de l'autre

Tendons nos bras et sur ces rails roule un long train de
marchandises"

-but in fact the force of the expression "qui mourons de vivre loin l'un de l'autre" is such that one wonders whether there is not another dimension to this verse also. If so it is surely the familiar yearning for a woman who has left him. Perhaps this the woman referred to in the line quoted on the preceding page. This idea would certainly fit with the next line-

"Tu pleurais assise près de moi au fond d'un fiacre"

And in this context the train of women following the young man appears almost as a kind of wish fulfilment, but one of which the poet is conscious, for he has already said that he is writing about the possibilities of himself? Therefore, if he is constantly deserted by women he loves, it is certainly another possibility of his existence that he should ^{be} irresistibly attractive to them, and take his revenge upon them by spiriting them away at the end of the poem-which ending reveals to a great degree the irony to which the poet is subjecting himself in the poem.

The next line identify the lost love with the poet's self as in "Arbre"-

"Et maintenant

Tu me ressembles tu me ressembles malheureusement"

-and the image which follows fixes the poet and his love in an immobile unexpected way-

"Nous nous ressemblons comme dans l'architecture du siècle dernier
Ces hautes cheminées pareilles à des tours"

There is one further reference to the external world and then
the poem returns to the procession of the women following the pied
piper-

"Et tandis que le monde vivait et variait"

-and the poem ends with a synthesis of the poet's pain (surely for
his lost love) and the last notes of the music which has lured away
all the women of the quarter-

"O nuit

Toi ma douleur et mon attente vaine

J'entends mourir le son d'une flûte lointaine (1)

The basic narrative structure of the poem has been transformed by
the surprise images of the section beginning-"Puis ailleurs"- and
what the poet has made of the poem is an simultaneous complex of his
own emotions, impressions of the area round the church and fragments
of the external world which bear no relation to the theme of the
pied piper or of the sadness of an abandoned lover. The dimension
which Apollinaire has added to this poem is partly that of the poem-
object, the thing distinct from its creator, but it is mostly acknow-
ledgement of an exterior reality which is not as important either for
us or for the poet as the imaginative reality of the poem.

- (1) Cf. "Une dame penchée à sa fenêtre m'a regardé longtemps m'éloi-
gner en chantant" - "Les Fiançailles" - same mood of sadness
brought about through distance.

We pass on now to an examination of "Un fantôme de nuées", but we shall have more to say about the poem-object and its place in Apollinaire's poetic theories in our discussion of the calligrammes. As we have said, this poem has a basic narrative structure which concerns the poet going out into the streets to watch some acrobats ~~tes~~ perform on the eve of the 14th of July. There are aspects of the poem which might recall Picasso's pink period paintings of circus performers, but neither of these facets of the poem ~~is~~ what interests us principally. For the purposes of this study, the most interesting aspect of the poem is the way in which the poet transforms his narrative from something quite simple into something much more subtle, and the degree to which he does this through the use of surprise images.

In fact, one might be forgiven for thinking that Apollinaire had written this poem very early in his career, for he does employ surprise images in this poem but his use of them is extremely modest, almost as if he were not sure of their potential. The first departure from the straight-forward narrative tone comes in the lines-

"Poids formidables

Villes de Belgique soulevées à bras tendu par un ouvrier russe
Haltères noirs et creux qui ont pour tige un fleuve figé ^{de Longwy}

Doigts roulant une cigarette amère et délicieuse comme la vie(1)

It must be admitted that the pun is not particularly funny, even in the context of the Russian's worker's presence. It does however alter the tone of the poem if only slightly. The next two lines perform a metamorphosis which adds nothing to our knowledge of the weights and which might almost describe as gratuitous were it not for the fact that through these changes the poet is not really

(1) O.P. p. 193

attempting to describe the object at all but rather is, as it were, offering us his own side-show. The spar by which the dumbbells are held becomes in turn a "fleuve-figé" and a cigarette rolled in the fingers of the weight-lifter. The first of these two metamorphoses gives an impression of the strength involved in the lifting of the dumbbell, this is the kind of strength which can hold back rivers; the second gives an idea of a certain outlook on life which is almost certainly that of the performers. Thus the imagery in these lines is not meant to tell us about the weights but about the people whom the poet is watching.

The surprise involved in these images come firstly at their apparent gratuitousness, and then also in the terms of the imagery—"fleuve figé" carries a considerable surprise value, and the comparison "amère et délicieuse comme la vie" is clearly unexpected.

On the next page we find an isolated line which interrupts the slightly morbid direction that the poem has taken as Apollinaire concentrates on the description of the performers—

"Les bras les bras partout montaient la garde"

—the line is situated between the end of the description of the tubercular bloom in the complexion of the old man and the beginning of the description of the second "saltimbanque" who has certain rather mysterious attributes as we shall see in a moment. To whom then do the arms belong? To the old man? To the other acrobat? To the crowd surrounding them, perhaps? It is not really important, in fact. What is important is the image of arms involved in disciplined movement, through which we become aware of the physical activity which for this man is staving off death. Should he cease to perform, all that he has left to do is lie down and die. This is brought home to

us much more through this sudden, strange image than through all the preceding lines concerning the sickly complexion which is obvious to the unlookers.

The next few lines, concerning the second acrobat, bring a mysterious note to the poem-

"Le second saltimbanque
N'était vêtu que de son ombre
Je le regardai longtemps
Son visage m'échappe entièrement
C'est un homme sans tête" .

It is clear in the second line that Apollinaire is not describing a real acrobat, or if the figure he is describing does correspond to one of the troupe, then he has been totally transformed by the poet's imagination. The headless shadowy figure becomes very disquieting to us, and appearing after the passage concerning the illness of the old man, he seems somehow connected with one or the other. Perhaps he is the old man's alter ego, perhaps a figure of death. The important point for us to note here is that the poet simply introduces his mysterious character, very quietly, into the poem and leaves him to work upon our imaginations .

The narrative continues and we follow it almost to the point of disregarding lines such as-

"Que moulait l'homme au visage couvert d'ancêtres

The poet has already touched upon this idea in the line-

"La cendre de ses pères lui sortait en barbe grisonnante"

-but this is to the reader a not too surprising way of saying that the man is old like his father before him grew old and so on. The second occurrence of the image, however, is much closer to a baroque conceit- the middle term of the metaphor has been removed, so that

the image becomes grotesque. It is no longer a question of seeing the man in a line of family descent, the strangeness of the image surpasses this simple aspect of the poet's vision, the old man becomes an ugly image of the past which is accompanied by the brash music of the organ, both in sharp contrast with the graceful movements of the little acrobat.

The next passage brings a different treatment of the same idea, and the poet reaching the climax of his imagery brings the poem to an unexpected end-

"Le petit saltimbanque fit la roue
Avec tant d'harmonie
Que l'orgue cessa de jouer
Et que l'organiste se cacha le visage dans les mains
Aux doigts semblables aux descendants de son destin
Foetus minuscules qui lui sortaient de la barbe"

To the dimension of the past is added that of the future. The figure of the organist becomes generation after generation of ugly, disease-ridden people who cannot attain the momentary transcendence of losing themselves in movement and rhythm.

The poet does not, however, allow things to settle here; he breaks the atmosphere of pathos with a loud whoop-

"Nouveaux cris de Peau-Rouge"

-which is the expression of the overflow of joy and enthusiasm that arise from the experience of absorption in physical activity. Then the child acrobat disappears -

"Musique angélique des arbres

Disparition de l'enfant"

Clearly, the poet is stressing the ephemeral aspect of the ability to lose self in some momentary activity, beside which the feats of

strength of the weight-lifters ~~is~~^{are} nothing at all. Hence the last two lines of the poem which enlarge the canvas far beyond the image of the street acrobats-

"Mais chaque spectateur cherchait en soi l'enfant miraculeux
Siècle 8 siècle de nuages"

Apollinaire hails the twentieth century as the century of the momentary, the ephemeral but the transcendental. His "fantôme de nuées" is the alter ego of the twentieth century man and is committed to the perfection of the moment.

As we said earlier in this section what principally holds our attention in the poems studied here is that images of violence are relegated to a minor role in comparison with the poems which preceded them. Nevertheless they are present in these poems and as such show the importance of the position which they had developed in Apollinaire's writing, for it is clear that in ~~these~~ poems he was exploring new avenues for his poetry and yet could not quite put aside this element of his style.

CHAPTER THREE ; SECTION FOUR

ONDES (C)

In this section we shall deal with the one remaining poem from the section of "Calligrammes" entitled "Ondes", that is to say the poem entitled "A travers l'Europe" which was originally given the title of "Rodztag" when sent to Marc Chagall and "Rotsoge" when published in "Les Soirées de Paris". We have chosen to deal with this poem separately because it was written by Apollinaire after a visit to the studio of Chagall and is a kind of tribute by Apollinaire to the painter. It is a tribute in the sense that Apollinaire chose to use images which he saw in the canvases in Chagall's studio, but it is also a poem which owes more to its author's originality of style than to an attempt to render a literary equivalent to the painting of Chagall. (1)

Although, as we have said, there are certain of the poet's images which may be shown to have been directly inspired by the paintings which Chagall had completed at the time of Apollinaire's visit to his studio ("Ton visage écarlate", "Ta maison ronde où nage un hareng saur", "un homme en l'air un veau qui regarde à travers le ventre de sa mère"), this does not mean that Apollinaire was using these images in the same way as Chagall. It will be seen from the ensuing analysis that the structure of the poem and the use of images which have no logical connection with one another is perfectly consistent with Apollinaire's writings of this period, and that, consequently, his decision to employ images taken from Chagall's paintings is to be seen as a tribute offered to the painter and nothing else.

(1) Cf. Marc Chagall "Ma vie" p. 169.

The poem begins with the word "Rotsoge"(1) which is something of a mystery in itself, being neither French nor German nor Russian nor Jewish (Yiddish, that is) nor, as far as we have been able to ascertain, the title of any of Chagall's paintings of the period. Thus, the poem begins with a sound to which we can attach no meaning, but which is not followed by any other sequence of sound separated from meaning. Instead, what follows is a series of verbal images which offer no connection between one and the next or any subsequent image. If the first three details evoked are all linked by the use of the pronoun "ton" or "ta", there is nothing else except their unreality to tie them together-

"Ton visage écarlate tonbiplan transformable en hydroplan

Ta maison ronde où il nage un hareng saur"

Yet when compared with the following lines, these have one other thing in common, they are all visual images (perhaps all details taken from Chagall's paintings), whereas the next line-

"il me faut la clef des paupières"

-is not only less visual, it is a line taken from "La Clef"(2) a poem which Apollinaire wrote in 1902 or perhaps even earlier. Perhaps its appearance here may be due to the fact that Apollinaire felt that Chagall's vision of the world was so radically different from his own. This line is followed by three lines which seem to be an extract from some conversation and are in no way visual in their inspiration-

"Heureusement que nous avons vu M. Panado

Et nous sommes tranquilles de côté-là

Qu'est-ce que tu vois mon vieux M.D."

(1) O.P. p. 201

(2) O.P. p.554 -this detail is not mentioned in the notes to the Pléiade edition.

Thus the completely free visual images are followed by an entirely gratuitous piece of conversation, which seems to make of the poem some sort of amalgam of the styles of "Les Fenêtres" and "Lundi Rue Christine". The last line of the opening section of the poem is as mysterious as the first in its use of numbers which have no apparent connection with the rest of the line or with anything else in the poem. This lends to the numbers a cabalistic aura of significance-

"90 ou 324 un homme en l'air un veau qui regarde à travers le ventre de sa mère"

-whereas both the other details in the line can be seen in paintings which Chagall produced about this time. Of course, this does not mean that the poem is about Chagall's painting, for the ordinary reader has no way of knowing that the visual elements of the poem have been seen by the poet in the painter's work-this is especially true of the contemporary reader who had as yet had no opportunity of seeing of Chagall's work. Thus we must consider the visual imagery of the poem simply as images completely liberated from the demands of logic, the logic, that is, both of context and of visual authenticity, for not only is there no connection between the images, no kind of progression from one to the other, they also deny the truth of the realities to which they are attached- no face is really scarlet, no herring are to be found swimming by the time they are smoked, especially in a house; very few houses are round; calves cannot see through, or be seen through their mother's wombs and the biplane that is able to become a flying boat cannot be categorised as one thing

or the other. Thus the essence of the imagery is its unreality.

As for the fragment of conversation, it is neither self-explanatory nor appropriate to any of the poem's images; it too has been completely liberated from any requirements of logic or context.

The next passage opens with two lines which with one small change, have been taken from "La Clef" (1), and the third line has had the last word slightly altered in being transplanted from the same poem. However, Apollinaire gives his readers no indication of this and so we do not think it appropriate to draw the conclusion that he is comparing Chagall's painting with this extremely mediocre and symbolist allegory composed in his youth. Surely it is rather that Apollinaire is saying that Chagall's is a way of looking at the world to which he wishes to respond but which is foreign to him. Certainly, in all his writings on art Apollinaire praised Chagall as a brilliant colourist but he has almost nothing more to say about him, and Chagall himself has said that his aspirations were completely removed from what the Cubists or the others that Apollinaire knew were doing.

But we have already said that the ordinary reader has no way of knowing that the imagery is drawn from Chagall's paintings; there is the dedication, which in one published version of the poem was written "Au Peintre Chagall", but few people if any, had seen as much of Chagall's painting as would enable them to grasp the significance of the poem's imagery. We must therefore conclude that what interested Apollinaire above all in Chagall's work, precisely because it was an element of his own, was the break with logical demands on

(1) O.P. p. 554

presentation and the discarding of any explanation for seemingly arbitrary detail. Consider the details which Apollinaire has chosen from Chagall's painting -

"Ton visage écarlate", "Ta maison ronde où ^{il}nage un hareng saur", "un homme en l'air un veau qui regarde à travers le ventre de sa mère"-these are images which might surely have found their place in "Les Fenêtres" or indeed in "Les Fiançailles" as examples of the power of the imagination to create a new reality.

Thus the next two lines are not only to be interpreted as being the poet speaking to himself about his desire to understand the painting of Chagall, but are also the poet indicating to the reader that if he wishes to see the world in this way then he has only to allow himself to look.

The following line seems to be offered as the subject for a painting -

"Le vieux se lave les pieds dans la cuvette"

- or perhaps as an example of an ordinary image which could be transformed by the power of the imagination. The banality of the line comes as a challenge to the reader to open his eyes and to see the scene in a new and more beautiful light.

The next line is a fragment of Italian and seems to be an extract from a conversation-

"Una volta ho inteso dire Chè vuoi"

-"Once I thought I heard (him) say What do you want". Why did the poet choose to include this line in another tongue? Perhaps to underline the chance factor, its arbitrariness; perhaps also to provide as with the first line a dimension of sound without meaning

to the reader. It is interesting to note that in one of his early calligrammes, Apollinaire had gone as far as including pure sounds; the poem "Lettre-Océan" has in the central core representing the Eiffel tower several sounds to which no meaning can be attached, although the sounds "ro ro ting ting" are probably meant to represent the noise of a bus starting up, and the noise of the conductor's bell. This is not however a development which Apollinaire was to continue, so it is perhaps not unreasonable to conclude that his imagination had gone as far as envisaging a poem of sound divorced from meaning, and that consequently the inclusion of a line of Italian in this poem was intended to be a step in that direction.

This second passage of the poem ends with the line-

"Je me mis à pleurer en me souvenant de vos enfances"

-the melancholy of which rejoins the third line of the passage.

We wonder, on reading the line why the poet has used the pronoun "vos"; true, it is not unknown for him to do so when referring to himself, but here it is not only the second person plural which he has used, but also the plural form of this person, therefore he must be thinking of more than one person. Is he perhaps addressing the reader? The lament for lost innocence also, so perhaps the poet is telling the readers that their understanding needs to be that of a child to appreciate the poem- and by extension, the painting of Chagall.

The next line is clearly addressed to Chagall, and it would, we think, have been obvious to the ordinary reader that this was so, given the original dedication of the poem "Au Peintre Chagall"-

"Et toi tu me montres un violet épouvantable"

Apollinaire most probably inserted this line at this point of the poem in order to break from the sentimentality of the preceding line; characteristically he never allows a sentimental moment to prolong itself.

As the preceding line was a reference to Chagall's painting so now the next passage begins with a direct reference to a particular painting-

"Ce petit tableau où il y a une voiture m'a rappelé le jour
Un jour fait de morceaux mauves jaunes bleus verts et rouges
Où je m'en allais à la campagne avec une ~~q~~ahrmante cheminée
tenant sa chienne en laisse"

Is there not perhaps something of the poem's arbitrary juxtaposition of images in the juxtaposition of colours in the second line? Mauve, yellow, blue, green, and red, are all mentioned as pure colours and not as combinations-is this not perhaps a parallel which Apollinaire had seen between his own poetry and Chagall's style of painting. And the third line with its absurdity, its "surreality", is this not both characteristics of Apollinaire's poetry and of Chagall's painting? Consider the imagery which we have discussed in most of the poems written since 1907; this image would not be out of place among them. And as for Chagall, in a world where people float in mid-air, where faces are coloured green, or blue or scarlet, and any other convention which the artist desires to break is broken, it would not be out of place to find a chimney-piece taking a dog for a walk in the country. To the reader unaware of either the work of Chagall, or the fact that the poem is dedicated even to a painter, this passage is of necessity rather more mysterious, but not

at all completely obscure. It is clear that the poet is drawing a parallel between the liberty of the image and the liberty of fragments of colour, and a parallel between the juxtaposition of both. As to the line beginning "Où je m'en allais" it is no more serious than any other line in the poem, and is easily seen as an example of the "surreal".

The passage now continues with a line which might be an adult speaking to a small child-

"Il n'y en a plus tu n'as plus ton petit mirliton"

-which recalls the theme of lost innocence, and in this case the child's toy, a musical instrument of the most elementary kind which would no doubt greatly amuse a child but would probably annoy an adult just as much, becomes a symbol of this lost innocence and ability to appreciate lack of harmony and logical connections.

The next line is a kind of visual pun, depending on the length of Russian cigarettes resembling a chimney seen in the distance -

"La cheminée fume loin de moi des cigarettes russes"

There is also, of course, the fact that Chagall was a Russian, and had painted portraits of himself smoking, which may have suggested the image to Apollinaire. This line is also the first in a list of details bearing no relation to each other which the poet accumulates to the end of the poem

"La chienne aboie contre les lilas

La veilleuse est consumée

Sur la robe ont chu des pétales

Deux anneaux d'or près des sandales

Au soleil se sont allumés

Mais tes cheveux sont le trolley

A travers l'Europe vêtue de petits feux multicolores"

Certain of these details are even contradictory, for if the gold rings are lit by sunlight, then the burnt-out night light does suggest that it is not day. What this final passage presents is a kind of simultaneity, which the alert reader might well have expected after the title. It is possible that Apollinaire chose the title "A travers l'Europe" not only because Chagall, a Russian, and he, born in Italy, living in France, but of Russian nationality through his mother, shared the same ideas, or at least similar ideas, but also because this was the time when the concept of an international artistic ^aavant-garde was becoming apparent.

"La notion d'avant-garde artistique ne peut se développer qu'à partir de 1910. Auparavant, écrivains ou peintres peuvent avoir conscience de ce qui les sépare du "bourgeois"; songer à une~~e~~ réconciliation de l'art avec le peuple ou la vie moderne, se considérer comme des précurseurs. L'esprit d'avant-garde est autre chose; le sentiment aigu que l'art qui s'épuise dans les traditions académiques, est à réinventer; la volonté de rompre avec le passé, de chercher une inspiration et des formes neuves, de se lancer dans l'aventure; la préoccupation constante de l'avenir, tel que le forge la révolution scientifique et technique. Il bouleverse l'ordre, se livre aux expériences les plus hasardeuses, préfère l'audace à la perfection, la découverte à la certitude. Préparé en France par le futurisme de Marinetti, fécondé par l'exemple de la peinture, il s'épanouit à partir de 1912 dans les manifestations les plus variées, parfois puériles, parfois capitales dans l'évolution poétique". (1)

(1) M. Décaudin "La crise des valeurs symbolistes" p. 470

Thus M. Décaudin describes the birth of the ¹avant-garde, and we consider this to be an idea that is strictly relevant to this poem. We have already pointed out the international character of the career of Apollinaire; Chagall was not only a Russian working in France, but was also a Jew, and the poem seems to be saying that they share certain ideas basic to their art. The climax of the poem presents an accumulation of details which are linked, in a completely non-logical fashion, by the last two lines, which not only carry a strong note of modernism- "tes cheveux sont le trolley" but also recall the lines from "Liens"-

"Rails qui ligotez les nations

Nous ne sommes que deux ou trois hommes

Libres de tous liens

Donnons-nous la main" (1)

And it is by no means far fetched to suggest that the "petits feux multicolores" are the few men who are leading the artistic revolutions all over Europe.

Thus this poem is as much about all ¹avant-garde painting and poetry as it is about the work of Apollinaire and Chagall. This being the case, what Apollinaire is advancing as the cornerstone of the avant-garde revolution is total liberty of the image, and he is accompanying this with a plea for a sympathetic audience, reminding them of their ability to accept such a conception of the world when they are children. It is nonetheless clear that this poem is not exceptional in the work of Apollinaire, either at this time or later (one thinks of his later publication "L'Esprit nouveau et les poètes"). The discontinuity of

(1) O.P. p. 167

the style of the poem is pushed no further than in "Les Fenêtres" or "Arbre", and the contrast and comparison of the visual and the sonorous details are already present in "Les Fenêtres" and indeed in some of the calligrammes". Surely it is by this time superfluous to stress that these developments spring from the exploitation of violence in literature which is present in the poetry of Apollinaire from 1905 onward.

To conclude this section, we note that this poem, like "Arbre" like "Les Fenêtres", "Liens" and also "Les Collines" although it was composed later, is largely a poem about writing poetry. It is clearly the stamp of the writings of this period in Apollinaire's life to be experimental and inward looking, and it should come as no surprise to us to find him experimenting with the visual structure of the poem as much as with its philosophical structure. It is also true that all the experiments of this period depend to a great extent upon the deliberate and provocative break with convention.

CHAPTER THREE : SECTION FIVE

ETENDARDS (A)

In this section we propose to examine most of the poems included in the section of "Calligrammes" entitled "Etendards". We have chosen to separate those poems which were inspired by Louise de Coligny from the others and will deal with them in the next section. Thus the poems which will concern us here are "La Petite Auto", "A Nîmes", "2e Canonnier Conducteur" and "Ombre" which may well have been composed some time after the other poems included here, but which, not being of major importance, we have nevertheless included with them (1).

The circumstances in which the poem "La Petite Auto" (2) was composed were the mobilisation of Europe on the eve of the first World War. In this poem, then, Apollinaire is looking forward to a mammoth conflict of peoples which he already sees in almost sexual terms-

"Des géants furieux se dressaient sur l'Europe
 Les aigles quittaient leur aire attendant le soleil
 Les poissons voraces montaient des abîmes
 Les peuples accouraient pour se connaître à fond"

We say already because this mingling of the sexual and the war scene was to become one of the common themes of the poetry which he wrote in the trenches. This is clearly an extremely fertile field for the shock image, and we shall see that Apollinaire seldom fell back on the

(1) O.P. p. 1088 - Soupault's version of how the poem came to be written

(2) O.P. p. 207

play on "l'amour-la mort" but managed to create a whole range of poetry on this and allied themes.

The extent to which he was to identify himself with the phenomenon of war is also foreshadowed in this poem-

"Je m'en allais portant en moi toutes ces armées qui se battaient"

Is this the poet's recognition of the fact that war is a moment of truth brought about through violence, and that this is what he was attempting to achieve in his poetry? It is, of course, possible, but in our opinion, Apollinaire's ideas of violence in literature are not to be too closely related to physical violence and certainly not the unspeakable slaughter of the First World War. We consider it much more likely that Apollinaire saw in the war the end of an epoch-

"Nous comprîmes mon camarade et moi

Que la petite auto nous avait conquis dans une époque
nouvelle

Et bien qu'étant déjà tous deux des hommes mûrs

Nous venions cependant de naître"

-and that he saw in his own poetry the end of a literary epoch.

Not that the question remained for him one of purely literary considerations; his poetry as we have shown and will show in the poems which we have not yet analysed, was for him an expression of a sensibility which he considered to be that of the new century. And so he saw in the war, which was to sweep away the nineteenth century in a far more radical manner than a simple change of date from 1899 to 1900 could ever do, an equivalent to his sweeping away of the barriers of artistic conventions and with them the irrelevant modes of feeling which they represented. He may certainly be forgiven if, in 1914, he did

not foresee the nature of the war which was to be the most terrible slaughter the world had ever known.

In passing we might also remark that in this poem Apollinaire seems to have foreseen not only the war in the air but also the war beneath the sea-

"Océans profonds où remuaient les monstres
 Dans les vieilles carcasses naufragées
 Hauteurs inimaginables où l'homme combat
 Plus haut que l'aigle ne plane
 L'homme y combat contre l'homme
 Et descend tout d'un coup comme une étoile filante"

-although the terms in which he expresses this vision of the future would not be out of place in the poetry of earlier centuries. In this respect Apollinaire was not alone, for if one reads the poetry which was written in English about the first world war, then one finds a sharp divergence between the poems written about the time of mobilisation and during the first months of the war, which are patriotic and stress the honour and glory of war, and the later poems written by men who had seen and fought in the front line, which are full of the horrors of war (1). We must treat with great caution the accusation which has been brought against Apollinaire, by Mme. Durrty among others, that he was insensitive to the real nature of the First World War.

However, to return to the text of "La Petite Auto", there is one image above all others which holds our attention, and which, apart from the passage written in the form of a calligramme, is the most

(1) Compare, for example, the anthology of English war poetry "Up to the Line to Death".

unusual in the poem-

"Je sentais en moi des êtres neufs pleins de dextérité

Bâtir et aussi agencer un univers nouveau

Un marchand d'une opulence inouïe et d'une taille prodigieuse

Disposait un étalage extraordinaire"

The "être neufs" of the first line are no strangers to us, the modern men born of the liberated subconscious have appeared in poems analysed in previous sections of this study, and their appearance here lends weight to our hypothesis that Apollinaire saw the war as the parallel development in history to the development in poetry and art which were taking place in his own work and the work of his friends. but the following image is truly astonishing in the degree to which it foresees the attitude to war of most of the European proletariats after the end of the First World War. It might also have been adopted by the communist parties as an illustration of their policy and of the image of war which they attempted to project to the masses- war as an instrument for the enrichment of the ruling capitalist classes! Looked at within the context of the poem, this image is not so one-sided a view of war. Since it is preceded by the appearance of the "êtres neufs pleins de dextérité" it must be seen also as an image of the riches which war can bring. Whether Apollinaire was thinking in terms of conquest and spoils or in terms of the stimulus which war imparts to the development of science, is difficult to say. Perhaps it was both, perhaps in view of the images of aeroplanes and submarines which we have already mentioned, it was simply the latter view which Apollinaire was advancing. Thus the image of the merchant has a good side that is quite inescapable but it should not be thought that the interpretation of this image

as a vision of war as a commercial enterprise is one which we put upon the image from a different historical standpoint from that occupied by the author. The lines following this image can surely leave us no doubt-

"Et des bergers gigantesques menaient

De grands troupeaux muets qui broutaient les paroles

Et contre lesquels aboyaient tous les chiens sur la route"

-this image can surely be interpreted in no other way than as a vision of the masses fed on propaganda, and being led like sheep to the slaughter-and the reason for the dogs'barking is that the masses are as good as dead already, and someone^{as} interested in superstition as Apollinaire could not be unaware that animals are supposed to be able to sense the approach of death and to be aware of the supernatural. Of course, it may be argued that there could be nothing more natural than for dogs to bark at passing herds of sheep, but this does not really explain why the poet chose to include this detail in his poem.

It is, of course perfectly legitimate to ask whether Apollinaire^h fully understood the meaning of these images, and in our opinion it is quite probable that he did not. This, however, does not mean either that the interpretation which we have put upon them is invalid, or that Apollinaire intended them to have some other meaning. We consider that rather it is a case of Apollinaire's ability to "prophecy" in his imagery and we would suggest, since this is a phenomenon with which we shall be faced in "Les Collines" also, that these images are really an expression of subconscious fears which the poet has been able to bring to the surface of his mind in the form of images.

We move on now to the poem "A Nîmes" which is an excellent illustration of a type of poetry which Apollinaire was to produce in great quantity during his period of active military service and consequent separation from his friends, that is to say the epistolary poem. The first few lines of this poem serve to give us a good idea of the style of most of the poems of this kind-

"Je me suis engagé sous le plus beau des cieux
Dans Nice la Marine au nom victorieux

Perdu parmi 900 conducteurs anonymes
Je suis un charretier du neuf charroi de Nîmes

L'Amour dit reste Ici Mais là-bas les obus
Epousent ardemment et sans cesse les buts"

The basic features of these verses are that they convey information in the same way that an ordinary letter would do, that they contain a certain amount of humour, which may be due to the need to find a rhyme (cf. the second verse) and that they also give another example of the marrying of the themes of eroticism and violence. Of these three features only the last will concern us to any degree, but as this particular instance is a very minor one, we postpone any discussion of the matter to later in this chapter except to note that from the very first contact with military life these themes are present in Apollinaire's poetry.

Only one other verse need retain our attention and it is this-

"Mais ce pâle blessé m'a dit à la cantine
Des obus dans la nuit la splendeur argentine"

Before even seeing action, and perhaps before even firing a cannon in

in the course of his period of training, Apollinaire is anticipating the aesthetic side of his service with the artillery. This fascination with the explosion of shells should not, however, surprise us when we think of the importance of such an image as-

"La girande tourne ô balle ô belle nuit" (1)

-in "Les Fiançailles", and the place which the ephemerally and selfdestructively beautiful held in Apollinaire's poetry to ^{that} date.

This now brings us to a consideration of "2e Canonnier Conducteur", a poem in both the form of regular verse, including vers libre, and calligrammatic form. The tone of the poem is still one of the celebration of the panoply of war, including the wildest of barrack-room anecdotes, in fact the description of the infantry reveals a naïvety which only those who had not seen the front line combats could fail to find misplaced-

"Fantassins

Marchantes mottes de terre

Vous êtes la puissance

Du sol qui vous a faits

Et c'est le sol qui va

Lorsque vous avancez" (2)

As the French soldiers dressed in blue, this image is not even a conceit based on the similarity of camouflaged uniforms and the colour of the ground.

Again there is an image which betrays the poet's delight in shell bursts

(1) O.P. p.136 cf. also the analysis of "Les Fiançailles" in the preceding chapter

(2) O.P. p. 215

"Ses fleurs sont nos obus aux gerbes merveilleuses"

-and which is only one example of the many many occasions on which the poet was to use this or similar images. That is not to say that the image is shallow or facile, although on some occasions it does not have the power and depths which it has on others. As we have said, Apollinaire finds in this image an illustration of ephemeral beauty, but also the necessary element of violence and it was for him an objective correlative of the kind of imagery which he was seeking in his own poetry.

Before leaving this poem we look at a point which is probably more relevant to a discussion of calligrammes, but which, since it seems to us to reveal the ambiguity of Apollinaire's attitude to war, we shall examine now. The end of this poem is an alexandrine written in calligrammatic form-

J'ENTENDS CHAN
L TER l'oiseau
E
B E
EL OISEAU RAPAC

-and the form of the calligramme is of importance in determining whether the force of the image lies in "Bel" or in "rapace". It seems to us that the form which Apollinaire arranged his line in, is that of the barrel and magazine of a machine gun, in which case he is clearly stressing the dangerousness of the bird which he hears singing, and is in fact presenting us with an image of the fatal fascination of war. Thus the end of the poem is perhaps a commentary on the foolishness of his own feelings towards the war and the life of the soldier in barracks which he is experiencing at this time.

Finally we pass on to an examination of the poem "Ombre", which was most probably written after Apollinaire's return from active service, and after he himself had sustained a serious wound. We are including it in our discussion of the poems in the section "Etendards" because we feel that Apollinaire himself placed the poem in this section to be a commentary on the poems written before his experience of the war. The beginning of the poem certainly suggests that it is being written long after the previous poem--

Vous voilà de nouveau près de moi

Souvenirs de mes compagnons morts à la guerre" (1)

In this poem as clearly as anywhere else in the whole of his work Apollinaire sets out his thoughts on life and death, and the nature of human experience. Beginning with the evocation of his friends killed during the war, he springs upon the reader an image so strange and unexpected that it becomes one of these rare images which persist in the mind long after their context has been forgotten--

"L'olive du temps"

To what does the image owe its power? Partly, as we have said, to the element of surprise and to its stran^rgeness, partly also to the associations of great age which olives have acquired in the corpus of the literatures of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean, and partly also to the fact that literally interpreted the image is one of a space-time continuum which is in keeping with much of the scientific thought of the twentieth century about the nature of the universe. Just as the taste of olives remains the same through centuries of the history of the Mediterranean peoples, and causes poets to use it as a symbol

(1) O.P. p. 217

of time itself, the bitterness of the taste being appropriate to Man's experience of time the destroyer, so in the context of this poem the image seems to equate the presence of the poet's companions in his memory with their physical presence. We say seems because the images which follow contradict the idea of individuality that is present in the poem.-

"Souvenirs qui n'en faites plus qu'un

Comme cent fourrures ne font qu'un manteau

Comme ces milliers de blessures ne font au'un article de journal"

The memories lose their individuality and merge into one, as a hundred furs make one coat losing their individual identity in the process, and as thousands of casualties become a single newspaper article. (Surely this image is fundamental to the experience not only of the first World War, but also to all areas of twentieth century life where weight of numbers overwhelms the personal.)

Consequently, the identity of the poet's companions is lost, and the implication is that they are trivialised by this loss of identity as the wounded in battle are trivialised by lists of casualties in newspapers. So the "olive du temps" is not the privileged communication with the past which enables us, as we eat an olive today to experience what we tasted yesterday or years ago or what the ancients tasted in their olives, but is rather the destructive effect of the passage of time which returns everything to the dust from which it came.

The lines which follow might be described as Apollinaire's version of "No Man is an Island"-

"Apparence impalpable et sombre qui avez pris

La forme changeante de mon ombre"

-for these lines show how the poet himself is affected by this passage of time, not only in the sense that he will one day be dead and all forgotten, but also as one whose past is disappearing, being modified by a memory which can only recall it imperfectly so that it appears as a changing shadow, or, as the next line expresses it, as a dark figure of whom we never gain more than a half glimpse-

"Un Indien à l'affût pendant l'éternité"

As we can look back on the past, even if only imperfectly, so we can be said to have some kind of communication with it; but as our past selves cannot look forward to what we are now, any more than our present selves can look forward to what we shall be tomorrow, so this communication is dissatisfying, but is nonetheless inescapable since we cannot avoid remembering-

"Ombre vous rampez près de moi

Mais vous ne m'entendez plus

Vous ne connaîtrez plus les poèmes divins que je chante

Tandis que moi je vous entends je vous vois encore

Destinées"

It is obvious that the "vous" refers not only to the dead companions of the poet but to himself, as he was, also; in the same way, the "Destinées" refers not only to the fact that it is Man's fate to die and to know no more of the world, but also to the fact that Man is becoming what he was because his past cannot communicate with his present nor his present with his future, and so his present and

future selves stand in the same relation to his future and still more distant future selves as his past does to his present self. In short the philosophical basis of the poem is a non-continuous, non-sequential view of human existence, which is entirely consistent with say, "Le Voyageur".

The arrangement of the lines of the poem enables us to read the line-

"Destinées"

-as part of the next sequence also, and so we find-

"Destinées

Ombre multiple que le soleil vous garde

Vous qui m'aimez assez pour ne jamais me quitter

Et qui dansez au soleil sans faire de poussière"

-that the poet seems to be restoring an element of individuality to the shadows that we will become. And in the line "Vous qui m'aimez assez...." the poet seems to be saying that through our love for someone else we may achieve a measure of continuity into the future, for we should note that the shadows remain with the poet not through his love for them but through their love for him. However, these lines because addressed to the sun, to the great natural forces of the universe, become an expression of Man's longing for immortality, rather than a confirmation that he will be immortal; for the sun obeys the immutable laws of the universe and on setting will lose our shadows in the darkness of night just as our own imperfect memories lose the individual identities of figures in the past among general recollections.

So the poem ends on a note of intense sadness, on an awareness

of the destiny of Man which the poet surely chose to place next to the almost jaunty poems written before we had experienced the conditions of the war in order to place them in a perspective which gives a far truer view of his nature than many commentators have discerned in his war poetry-

"Ombre encre du soleil

Ecriture de ma lumière

Caisson de regrets

Un dieu qui s'humilie"

The shadow is the sun's ink as the poem is the poet's light, i.e. the past is what remains of the present, perhaps blurred and distorted, just as the poet hopes his poem will be the future, that is to say will carry into the future the record of his regrets, thus revealing Man as a god who humiliates himself by showing his impotence in the face of Time. But all these lines are interlinked, so that each image supports the others; the sun humiliates itself by casting a shadow on the ground (we must not forget that humiliate. is derived from "humus"), and the ammunition case contains shells that will be fired and after a brief moment be forgotten, hence the poet's choice of phrase- "Caisson de regrets". Everything is transient and humbled by time.

The simplicity of this poem "Ombre" sets it apart from the experimental pieces written before and during the war, but it is a simplicity born of maturity which we shall encounter in the last poems which Apollinaire wrote before his death. This does not mean that the poem is without any of the features of the poetry which

Apollinaire had developed in his writing since 1906. On the contrary, the importance of the surprise and strangeness of the image "L'olive du temps", the contradictions and the non-logical sequence of the images demonstrate to what extent the techniques of violence are fundamental to Apollinaire's poetry--there is no logical reason why the image should suddenly become "Caisson de regrets".

To conclude this chapter we return briefly to "La Petite Auto"; it is possible that the central section of the poem, to which we have attached such great importance was composed about the time that "Ombre" was. The manuscript in the Fonds Doucet shows that in all probability this section was composed later than the rest of the poem, and in view of the content of this section it might be considered that it is more likely to have been written at a time when the poet was thinking along the lines which he reveals in "Ombre". Certainly both that section of "La Petite Auto" and the whole of "Ombre" show a greater awareness of the tragic aspects of war and death, and a more purely elegiac tone.

CHAPTER THREE : SECTION SIX

ETENDARDS (B)

We begin this section by a consideration of those two of the poems written to Louise de Coligny which Apollinaire included in "Etendards", namely "Fumées" and "C'est Lou qu'on la nommait". "Fumées" is an excellent illustration of the erotic fantasy of the front line soldier, but in this case it finds a far more delicate expression than in many of the other poems of this type. The end of this poem also displays a certain measure of self-irony which is seldom present in the love poems written to either Lou or to Madeleine.

The beginning of "Fumées" leads us to think that it is a poem about the pleasure which a soldier can find in smoking and savouring the smell of tobacco in a lull in the fighting-

"Et tandis que la guerre

Ensanglante la terre

Je hausse les odeurs

Près des couleurs-saveurs

Et je fu^m
 a
 du
 ta
 bac
 de
 ZO^{NE}

'1)

-but this sensual celebration passes quickly to the sexual while remaining on the plane of the Odours. The transformation is accomplished gradually and almost imperceptibly through the use of an ordinary metaphor- "Les boucles des odeurs" until there is

no longer any question at all of tobacco-

"Des fleurs à ras du sol regardent par bouffées
 Les boucles des odeurs par ~~tes~~ mains décoiffées
 Mais je connais aussi les grottes parfumées
 Où gravite l'azur unique des fumées
 Où plus doux que la nuit et plus pur que le jour
 Tu t'étends comme un dieu fatigué par l'amour"

The poem is clearly a kind of wish fulfilment- the lonely soldier turning one kind of limited sensual experience into a desired sexual encounter; but in these lines it is readily seen that the stimulation of the sense of smell provokes memories just as much as desires, and it is clear that what Adéma has called the "érotisme exacerbé" of his brief affair with Lou, is very much to the front of his mind.

These lines would not hold our attention long, then, were it not for the quatrain on which the poem ends-

"Tu fascines les flammes
 Elles rampent à tes pieds
 Ces nonchalantes femmes
 Tes feuilles de papier"

The ambiguity of the line- "Elles rampent à tes pieds"- creates a very complex image. It is obvious that the "Elles" is meant to refer both to the flames of the first line and to the "non-chalantes femmes" of the third. Thus we have an identification of the sheets of paper, on which the poet has written or is about to write, and the women of the third line, as well as the identification of the flames and the sheets of paper, which is perhaps a clear visual link. So the final quatrain is at one and the

same time a ^tatement of sexual powers, of magical powers over flames and of poetic power, sufficient to ~~stave~~ off any fear of the blank sheet of paper.

What the poet has done here is to postpone the first term of his metamorphoses to last, so that the sheets of paper which lead him to think of flames, which in turn lead him to think of sexual ardour and therefore of women, hold the key to the entire image. Because the sheets of paper are lying at his feet, then the flames are fascinated by him, i.e. they are around him but do not touch him; and also the women are lying at his feet. The result of this complex image is an identification of the acts of writing and of the whole process of sexual attraction.

In this poem, then, we do not find that blend of eroticism and violence which occupies so large a place in the poems to Lou, but we do find the indication that, quite naturally, there will be the constant presence of women in the poet's imagination, and that he will express his desire for them or memories of them in terms of his immediate surroundings, finding a degree of similarity between what he is doing and the sexual act .

"C'est Lou qu'on la nommait" is a different kind of poem altogether and the pun in the title is a fair indication of the wit that finds its place in the poem. For us the most interesting aspect of this poem is the lament at the end for the "guerres d'autrefois". This is not really a serious lament, but rather is the poet complaining that modern war has taken away all the former attractiveness of the soldier/warrior in the eyes of the ladies -

" Images populaires
 Que Georgin gravait dans le bois
 Où sont-ils ces beaux militaires
 Soldats passés Où sont les guerres
 Où sont les guerres d'autrefois" (1)

But this description of the glamour and heroic attitudes of the "beaux militaires" cannot but be ironic when it follows on the poet's description of the woman whom he is leaving to go and serve his country as-

"Les loups sont tigres devenus"

And so really what we find in this poem is yet another ironical look at the imagery of the past when applied to the present century.

These two poems, then, illuminate for us minor aspects of the major themes of Apollinaire's war poetry, and we shall see these themes more fully developed in the poems which were excluded from "Calligrammes" as well as those included in other sections in the volume . In particular the next section "Case d'Armons" contains one of the most important poems which exploit the blend of eroticism and violence, namely "Fête" (2) This poem is to be found, with a few modifications, as the first part of the poem "Roses Guerrières", number LXXVI of the poems to Lou. (3) Of the changes which have taken place in the transition from poem for Lou to the poem in "Calligrammes", only one, the appearance of the last line, is of major importance.

(1) O.P. P. 218

(2) O.P. p. 238

(3) O.P. p. 500

The "fête" of the title is soon identified in the first stanza as an artillery barrage-

"Feu d'artifice en acier"

-and this throws an ironic note into the description of the next line-

"Qu'il est charmant cet éclairage"

In addition to this warning, the next two lines lend a measure of justification to the description, so we must beware of accusing Apollinaire of insensitivity to the horror of the situation-

"Artifice d'artificier

Mêler quelque grâce au courage"

It would not be going too far, either, to see in these lines a possible apology that Apollinaire is offering for his war poetry, or at least for this poem.

The next verse leads us to the explicitly sexual imagery inspired by the explosion of the two flares-

"Deux fusants

Rose éclatement

Comme deux seins que l'on dégrafe

Tendent leurs bouts insolemment

IL SUT AIMER

quelle épitaphe"

The verse passes from the simple admiration for the beauty of the colours caused by the explosion, through the comparison of the flares to a woman's breasts, to the poet's preoccupation with possible death and the desire to be remembered by the woman or women he has loved. But the comparison carries the sexual aspect much further than the simply visual link of shape and colour between the exploding flares, the explosion of the flares is carried over by transferring the word "dégrafe" from the context of clothing where one would expect to find it to the breasts themselves. So the

bursting of the flares become the sensual exaltation of the caress, but in so doing, it carries the fierceness of the sexual desires to a level which transcends the sadistic, while retaining the essential element of violence.

It is worth comparing this image with the following one taken from a letter written to Madeleine -

"tes seins plus beaux que ceux de la Maja Desnuda de Goya et qui se tendent vers moi comme rose en bouton qui va s'épanouir". (1)
- in which the image of a breast about to burst open is rendered in more gentle terms. Here a tension is created by the evocation of flesh so firm that it seems about to burst into flower, in the poem "Fête" the image is carried a stage further and so appears almost as a kind of exorcism of desire, the explosion of the flare becomes the explosion of the desired flesh, and an explosion which is achieved by the poet (note the active verb), an explosion which consequently leads to the right to say - "IL SUT AIMER". Thus the explosion of the flares is equated with an exaltation of the senses to the point of inducing complete detachment from this world.

The next stanza returns us abruptly to the reality of the situation and then just as rapidly moves away again into realms of the poet's desires -

"Un poète dans la forêt
Regarde avec indifférence
Son revolver au cran d'arrêt
Des roses mourir d'espérance"

We are reminded, if we needed reminding, that the artillery barrage

(1) Tendre comme le souvenir -letter of 21st Oct.1915; O.C.t. 4 p.590

is seen through the eyes of a poet; and the poet is watching "avec indifférence" the death of the roses. The roses are, of course, not only real flowers with all that they carry in overtones of symbolism, pure and sexual love, but they are also the flares dying out, for these were described as a "Rose éclatement". Thus the very hope of satisfying sexual longing is what is killing roses- the poet's hopes, his desires, projected onto the image of the exploding flare, die away with them. Hence the line- "Son revolver au cran d'arrêt" becomes ambiguous. It is not only the reality, the armed soldier prepared to defend himself, but not yet under attack; it is also an image of sexual frustration. The indifference with which the poet watches the flares die is then carried over into his watching the fading of his own desires- the sudden bursting of the flares which has elicited the powerful sexual image has gone.

The next verse is completely detached from the reality of the exploding shells and remains on the level of the imagery of flowers, that is to say, in their ability to serve as sexual symbols.-

"Il songe aux roses de Saadi
Et soudain sa tête se penche
Car une rose lui redit
La molle courbe d'une hanche"

There is, of course, in Saadi an escapable echo of Sade which links the poet's thoughts of love to the scene of war). We do not, needless to say, overlook the possibility that the roses may be real flowers seen by the poet in the wood as well as symbols.

The first line of this verse introduces a peaceful note which is in complete contrast with the rest of the poem- the atmosphere of a Persian rose garden, but the erotic note is still present. (Saadi was the author of erotic and mystic poetry.) The poet's interest in the dying roses is stimulated by the erotic memories which the roses have called up for him. The poem's initial violence gives way to a gentler more sentimental desire which is reflected in the -"Molle courbe d'une hanche".

The final verse now marries, in as far as this is possible, these two aspects of the poem. In it the presence of the shells is subdued but not discarded, and the smell of battle becomes a terrible inebriant-

"L'air est plein d'un terrible alcool

Filtré des étoiles mi-closes

Les obus caressent le mol

Parfum nocturne où tu reposes"

The stars are presumably half-shut because they are partially obscured by the gun flashes themselves. The perfume of the flowers mingles with the smell of burning and is like a strong spirit to the poet who sees the passage of the shells through the air as a caress and suddenly introduces the presence of the woman who has been behind all the erotic imagery so far- she is now reposing on the perfumed night air. So the violence of the military imagery is married to the more sentimental floral imagery and the poem abruptly ends on a line which has been added to the last verse, not only in the sense that it is the fifth line of a four line verse but also in the sense that it was not present in the first version of the poem-

"Mortification des roses"

This line may be interpreted in many ways. The mortification of the roses may be the triumph of the violent and self-destructive elements of the poet's love over the more lasting tender and sentimental, although each retains its overtones of sexuality; it may be that it is the intensity of the poet's desire which has killed the roses, i.e. again his tenderness as in the line of the third verse- "Des roses mourir d'espérance". The mortification of the roses may also be the mortification of the flesh-the roses being identified with the flesh through their colour- brought about by the persistent stimulation of the poet's erotic sensibilities- he sees images of the flesh in flowers as well as explosions -none of these stimulations ever being fulfilled by the real presence of the woman he desires.

The important aspect of this final image is that it derives most of its ambiguity not from the preceding imagery of the poem but from the way in which it is simply added on at the end so that it can be identified with anything in either the last verse or indeed even the whole poem. To the violence of war which he has incorporated into his poem Apollinaire has added the violence of his own poetic technique in order to express the violence of his feelings.

CHAPTER THREE : SECTION SEVEN

THE WAR POEMS

Having now begun our analysis of the war poetry proper in "Calligrammes", we intend to carry on here and analyse fully the blending of the themes of eroticism and violence in these poems, particularly those written to Lou, as in these poems Apollinaire was not to be held back from full expression of his feelings by any wish to impress as he was, at least part of the time, with Madeleine Pagès.

We have already seen how Apollinaire's imagination was stimulated by the explosion of shells and flares, but in point of fact we find that in the poems he wrote from the front line or from the artillery positions behind the front line, he often made a systematic use of things which formed part of his daily life in the army as similes and metaphores when writing about Lou.

Consider the following lines taken from the fourth of the "Poèmes à Lou" which was sent from Nîmes late in 1914-

"Je pense à toi Lou ton coeur est ma caserne

Mes sens sont tes cheveux ton souvenir est ma luzerne" (1)

-or these lines from the eighth of these poems sent a month or two later-

"Ton amour est mon uniforme

Les doux baisers sont les boutons" (2)

(1) O.P. p. 380

(2) O.P. p. 386

And so it is only proper to see the images in which the violence of the war is blended with the eroticism of his memories and desires in the context of the general tendency of his poetry to use the immediate surroundings as the material for his descriptions. The second of the quotations given above comes from a poem which provides an excellent example of this kind of writing and shows very clearly how Apollinaire, no doubt often forcing himself to write in verse when he did not have the inspiration to create poetry, stimulated his imagination simply by looking round him and incorporating what he saw into his poem.-

"Je t'adore mon Lou et par moi tout t'adore

Les chevaux que je vois s'ébrouer aux abords

L'appareil des monuments latins qui me contemplent

Les artilleurs vigoureux qui dans leurs casernes rentrent

Le soleil qui descend lentement devant moi

Les fantassins bleu pâle qui partent pour le front pensent
à toi" (1)

Of course this deliberate use of the ordinary, this finding of poetry in the everyday is not new to Apollinaire; it is quite basic to the poetry which he wrote from the composition of "Les Fiançailles" onwards. Indeed a reading of the poems which were written as letters from the front or from the barracks often reveals how large a part is played in the pre-war poems by the art of the poet, for many of the war poems become tiresome, too systematic in their comparisons and are clearly seen to be forced.

To return, however, to the precise subject of this section, it is ⁱⁿ this context of choosing his comparisons from what surrounded

(1) O.P. p. 385

him at the moment, that we must consider the erotic passages of these poems. Consider the following lines, still taken from the same poem-

"Les branches remuées ce sont tes yeux qui tremblent
Et je te vois partout toi si belle et si tendre
Les clous de mes souliers brillent comme tes yeux
La vulve des juments est rose comme la tienne
Et nos armes graissées c'est comme quand tu me veux"

It is obvious that the transition from the simply amorous to the erotic does not occasion any change in the source of the imagery, and as it is extremely doubtful that Lou would have been flattered by the comparison in the penultimate line, it seems fair to conclude that Apollinaire was in his own eyes continuing the kind of poetry which he was writing before joining the army. The only differences are, firstly that he is again writing love poems, and secondly that the objects of daily use have changed and therefore his imagery must change also.

Having thus established that there is a more ordinary reason that one might suppose for the blending of the erotic with the imagery of war, it is now necessary to modify this slightly by considering the nature of Apollinaire's relations with Lou. The facts are well known and so there is no need for us to go into great detail here, suffice it to say that in a few days which they spent together in Nîmes they indulged their sexual desires without regard for what others might call vice, but which to Apollinaire at least, was normal conduct to those in love .

This should make it clear, if the poems themselves are not indication enough, that the letter-poems to Lou were written in an atmosphere of intense sexual stimulation. Consider the following lines from the ninth of the "Poèmes à Lou"-

"Mon Lou je veux te reparler maintenant de l'Amour

Il monte dans mon coeur comme le soleil sur le jour

Et le soleil il agite ses rayons comme des fouets

o o

Ah! Ah! te revoilà devant moi toute nue

Captive adorée toi la dernière venue

Tes seins ont le goût pâle des kakis et des figues de barbarie

Hanches fruits confits je les aime ma chérie" (1)

Not only do these lines reveal an intense sexual note in the imagery of fruit, there is also a hint of flagellation in the third line. In fact the whole poem is simply a sensual celebration of their love, and one which is better sustained and more convincing than many which Apollinaire wrote during this period of his life.

If further indication of this side of the poetry written at this time is needed than one has only to read the poem "Parce que tu m'as parlé de Vice..." (2). Thus we find there is a double stimulus toward the blending of the erotic and the violent in the poems of this period- the fact that the poet is surrounded by the instruments of war being translated into his poetry by a desire to find his imagery among the commonplace things which are part of his daily life; and the fact that the poet was involved in an intensely erotic experience.

(1) O.P. p. 387

(2) O.P. p. 396

If we add to these reasons the normal hunger for the presence of women which is felt by men in isolation and under pressures of the kind induced by the proximity of death, then we have all the impulses which would impart to Apollinaire's poetry the tone which it takes on during the years of active military service.

Just as the poem "Fête" provided us with one of the finest illustrations of the exploding shell as a sexual image, so the poem "Chef de Section" (1) provides one of the finest examples of the mingling of tension and violence of the attack with the similar feelings aroused in a sexual situation where one partner dominates the other-

"Ma bouche aura des ardeurs de géhenne

Ma bouche te sera un enfer de douceur et de séduction

° ° °

Les soldats de ma bouche te prendront d'assaut

° ° °

Ma bouche sera une armée contre toi une armée pleine de disparates

° ° °

Elle te murmure de loin

Tandis que les yeux fixés sur la montre j'attends la minute
prescrite pour l'assaut"

The real violence of this poem lies more in the fact that only in the very last line does the poet reveal that he is actually involved in the attack in real military terms, than in the comparison of the methods of war with those of love. The part which the desire to master and to dominate plays in any sexual relationship invites the use of the imagery of war, but as the last line reveals

(1) O.P. p. 307

the poet waiting for a real military assault to begin, so the imagery is turned round and the military attack is seen in sexual terms. The final shock is carefully concealed until the last possible moment as the poet, approaching the climax of the poem, drops the military comparisons and speaks in gentler and more conventional terms -

"L'orchestre et les chœurs de ma bouche te diront mon amour"
-and so the last line is clearly intended to surprise as much as possible, and it is through the surprise that the image manages to reverse the terms of the poem so that war is seen as a sexual activity as well as the sexual involvement of the poet being seen in military terms.

It is most probably this latter view, the description of war as a sexual act which has led to the accusations of insensitivity which have been levelled against Apollinaire as a war poet. Certainly it is true that on occasions he is often trivial in his use of the sexual metaphor when applied to war, and this is a theme which is present in his war poetry from the very beginning; we recall the line from "La Petite Auto"-

"Les peuples s'accouraient pour se connaître à fonds"

It seems to us that given the success of a poem such as "Chef de Section", and given the fact that this was a view of war which Apollinaire held, but not ^{to} the exclusion of others, he must be given a fair hearing when he writes in these terms. Those who object that an image such as this-

"Virilités du siècle où nous sommes

O canons"

(1)

-is a trivialisation of a war in which millions were killed, seem to us to be missing the point; for Apollinaire was not just making use of a convenient phallic symbol, either to shock or to be able to express himself in terms of his surroundings in order to keep to certain theories of poetry which he had elaborated; rather, it seems to us that he is making a genuine and significant image which expresses the horror of unbridled human desires.

Let us not forget what Apollinaire wrote about the Marquis de Sade-

"Il semble que l'heure doit venue pour ces idées qui ont mûri dans l'atmosphère infâme des enfers de bibliothèques , et cet homme qui parut ne compter pour rien durant tout le XIX^e siècle pourrait bien dominer le XX^e (1)

Also, let us look at the context in which the image quoted above is situated, it is taken from the poem "Fusée"-

"O vieux monde du XIXe siècle plein de hautes cheminées si belles et
si pures

Virilités du siècle où nous sommes

0 canons"

It is quite clear that the poet is making a distinction between the twentieth century and the nineteenth century which involves the contrast between the factory chimneys (the industrial revolution?) which he has attempted to deprive of phallic significance and the barrels of the cannons which he explicitly renders phallic. Thus the pure energy of the nineteenth century which found its

(1) Les Diables Amoureux pp. 193-194

outlet in the creation of industrial civilisation has given way to something much more sinister in the twentieth century. The next poem on the page facing the lines quoted above, is "Désir" (1) and it begins with a very significant image-

"Mon désir est la région qui est devant moi

Derrière les lignes boches

o o o o

Mon désir est là sur quoi je tire"

Surely what Apollinaire is trying to say is that if there is hate in love, if there is the desire to enslave within a relationship of love, then there must be love in hate, then there must be the desire to be dominated in the act of the aggressor. It seems to us that it is this somewhat Freudian view of human activity that Apollinaire is attempting to express in his use of sexual imagery in his war poetry, and of war imagery in his sexual poetry. And if Apollinaire felt something of the desire to be ^{the} glamorous warrior of the kind that inhabits the literature of past wars, and yet was able to recognise for what it is this aspect of human nature which enables men to find satisfaction in war and to be violent in love, then it seems to us to be nothing but irrelevant to say that he was insensitive to the horror of war. It is quite simply that his horror takes a more subtle form of expression than that of other poets, notably the English, and also that he was aware that there was in himself a temptation to seek satisfaction in the simplified solutions of the military mind. This he was honest enough to express in his poetry and also ⁱⁿ a rather different form in his letters to friends as well-

(1) O.P. p. 263

"Je suis bien et il me semble que le métier de soldat était mon vrai métier". J'aime beaucoup ça. Mon amie prétend que je suis sans cesse à l'opéra, et c'est vrai" (1) (our underlining)

But in order to understand fully the poems of the section entitled "Lueurs des Tirs", in which one finds the most important poems describing war in sexual terms rather than the contrary, it is necessary to look closely at the short poems, seven of them, which form the sequence "Le Médaillon toujours fermé" sent to Marie Laurencin, and written principally for her, although Apollinaire sent these poems to Madeleine as well. In this sequence of poems one finds a much more stylised imagery, a much calmer tone, and yet still basically the same pre-occupations as in the other love and war poems written from the barracks or from the front. Perhaps the fact that he felt Marie Laurencin to be irretrievably lost to him enabled Apollinaire to attain the objectivity and calm which lend such a note of maturity to these tiny poems. Of the poems in this sequence the two most ostensibly concerned with the war are "Les Grenadines Repentantes" and "L'Adieu du Cavalier". In the first of these two poems we find the following lines which are a fine example of what we have called the more stylised imagery of these poems-

"En est-il donc deux dans Grenade
Qui pleurent sur ton seul péché
Ici l'on jette la grenade
Qui se change en oeuf coché" (2)

-the description of an exploding grenade as scrambled eggs relies

(1) O.C.t. 4 pp. 780-781 (letter to Serge Ferat) 4th January 1915

(2) O.P. p. 251

very heavily on a stylisation of the visual aspect of the experience as does the image in the first line of the next verse-

"Puisqu'il en naît des coqs"

In this poem we find that the image of the exploding grenade is associated with the sexual at one remove as it were; for by playing on the meaning of the word "grenade" Apollinaire is able to suggest that the grenade and the pomegranate are one; and the pomegranate in the context of the poem, with lines such as the second line of the first verse, becomes the apple eaten by Adam and Eve. Hence the disdain of the cocks is for the fallen humans who are now condemned to live in "Nos effroyables jardins" which are the garden where the grenades, as opposed to the pomegranates, are the fruit and flowers .

Clearly the poet has achieved a synthesis of sexual guilt and the suffering of war in a much subtler and calmer way than he attempts in the later poems in "Lueurs des Tirs". As to the poem "L'Adieu du Cavalier", surely no one can be oblivious enough to the irony of the first line to be able to quote it as an example of Apollinaire's lack of sensitivity. Moreover the contrast between the first and the second stanzas of the poem shows clearly that the poet did not intend the poem to be judged on the first line or verse alone.-

"Ah Dieu! que la guerre est jolie

Avec ses chants ses longs loisirs

Cette bague je l'ai polie

Le vent se mêle à vos soupirs"

-we are presented with a picture of the soldier during the long hours

of waiting in the trenches polishing a ring for the woman he loves and whose sighs he imagines he hears in the wind. The second verse, from the very first word, turning "Ah! Dieu" into "Adieu" is clearly intended to destroy this image-

"Adieu! voici le boute-selle

Il disparut dans un tournant

Et mourut là-bas tandis qu'elle

Riait au destin surprenant"

There are none of the brutal sights of war in this second stanza, it is not in that way that it is intended to be a contrast to the first; the soldier dies as he might disappear from sight on turning a corner, and the woman who, he believed, loved him, is left to laugh at the strangeness of fate.

This poem, then, is surely not about war at all; rather it is about Apollinaire's vision of himself as the knight at arms fighting for his lady, and the truth of the situation as well- that the lady is indifferent. The unfaithfulness of the lady breaks the rules of the game, and reflects back on the rest of the poem, so that, in spite of what we have just said, the poem does finally become a poem about war and contrary to the impression given by the first line, Apollinaire is saying that it is not at all a lovely war, for as the lady is unfaithful to her cavalier, so the war is not a matter of jousting and gallantry. Perhaps this is as much conveyed in the line-

"Il disparut dans un tournant"

-the knight in armour disappears, the surprise of destiny is that war has become a much more savage form of courtship in which the

soldier/lover dies.

Let us now turn to the first of these poems, "La Grâce Exilée" which is also far from being as simple as it appears-

"Va-t-en va-t-en mon arc-en-ciel
 Allez-vous-en couleurs charmantes
 Cet exil t'est essentiel
 Infante aux écharpes changeantes" (1)

The grace of the title is already ambiguous, for there can be no doubt that the poet is as much referring to the absence of the traditional muse as he is to grace in the sense of elegance etc. This is also supported by the fact that the poems were written for Marie Laurencin, and it is not necessary to point to Rousseau's granting of the title muse in his painting (2) to underline the importance of the inspiration which she brought to Apollinaire-of course, it was also open to Madeleine to understand that she was the exiled muse.

The third line is the really crucial line of the stanza, for the meaning of "essentiel" is not here "absolutely necessary" but rather "of your essence". So what the poet is saying is that it is now impossible for the former ideas of beauty as embodied in the line-

"Infante aux écharpes changeantes"
 -to be present in his poetry any more. The reason for this is given in the last two lines of the poem-

"Mais un drapeau s'est envolé
 Prendre ta place au vent de bise"

(1) O.P. p. 247

(2) Cf. The portrait of Apollinaire and Marie Laurencin by Rousseau, entitled "le Poète et sa Muse"

The flag, symbol of country, has taken the place of the rainbow (which is of course never really there) and the rainbow derived its colours from the woman/~~use~~ who has been exiled. (Marie Laurencin as the wife of a German citizen was obliged to take refuge in Spain).

War, then, has taken the place of the Grace, and of grace. Therefore poetry cannot possibly remain the same. The next poem in the sequence "La Boucle retrouvée" is an illustration of this, for beginning with the evocation of a memory of a lock of hair, the poem concludes that the lock of hair is, along with the destiny that brought together the poet and its owner, coming to an end with the day-

"La boucle de mon souvenir
Et notre destin qui t'étonne
Se joint au jour qui va finir" (1)

The pun on "boucle de mon souvenir" brings out the idea that the old themes of love and beauty, indeed the whole poetry of the lost love and the elegiac style which Apollinaire has so mastered, are now a dead end which must be rejected. (Hence, perhaps the title of the sequence "Le Médaillon toujours fermé" indicating the closed nature of the experience, the idea that this kind of poetry is now only a memory.)

The next poem in the series "Refus de la colombe" is much more disquieting than the first two - indeed one finds that there is something of a cumulative effect throughout the sequence, and it is principally this which elevates these tiny pièces to the universal scale of the other poems discussed previously. The title of this poem, like the titles of the first two poems, is ambiguous; the dove which is refused could be the bird of peace or the holy spirit - in

fact, it is a combination of all three. The first two lines certainly suggest that it is the ~~wholy~~ spirit which is the dove in question-

"Mensonge de l'Annonciade

La Noël fut la Passion"(1)

What the poet is saying here is that the Passion of Christ was not the suffering and crucifixion through which the spirit finally gave up human form, but instead his birth at Christmas when he took up human form.

This statement is followed by two lines which are a comment upon this taking on of human form-

"Et qu'elle était charmante et sade

Cette renonciation"

The Annunciation was in fact a renunciation which was both charming and "sade". What, then is the word "sade"? The old French word "sade" meaning charming passed for a certain time into modern French, and indeed its existence is still testified to in the Larousse du XIX^e but with the qualification "Vieux". However, even if it were unknown to the reader of Apollinaire's day, he might have been able to guess at its meaning from the existence of its opposite "Maussade". But, it is certain that for Apollinaire, who was not normally given to using archaisms unless they were much more mysterious and romantic in their sounds than "sade", the simple monosyllable, this word must have had overtones of "sadique". And indeed this must also be true of his twentieth century readers for whom the sound "sade" would sooner evoke the name of the "divin marquis" than it would

(1) O.P. p. 249

the remnant of an old French word. Thus Apollinaire manages to say two opposing things in the same word - the act is both charming and sadistic. The spirit becoming flesh, this and not the death of Christ, this is the act which saved humanity, and Apollinaire appears to be saying that this act is the equivalent of the exaltation of crime as a sublime human activity, of the recognition of the fundamentally cruel aspect of human nature, by the Marquis de Sade.

So in the second verse the dove has been stabbed and bleeds still from this refusal of the spirit -

"Si la colombe poignardée
Saigne encore de ces refus
J'en plume les ailes, l'idée
Et le poème que tu fus"

and Apollinaire describes himself as plucking its wings, which are the idea and the poem which "you" were. We have said that the dove is not only the holy spirit, but also the dove of peace and the symbol of love; and now the poet introduces another person into the poem, who must surely be the woman of the first two poems, who might also, however be himself. Certainly, the figure of the dove in the calligramme "La colombe poignardée" is made up principally of the names of women whom Apollinaire had loved in the past, and their names, in capital letters, form the wings of the dove. So, it would seem fair to say that the woman, or women, of his past, were in his eyes a source of inspiration to him, which he is now plucking, i.e. destroying, in the same way that Christ become flesh destroyed the holy spirit.

This poem is then, a declaration that the poet is aware that men have turned away from peace and love, in fighting this war of

which he is part, and so he must make his poetry from this new reality, of which he embodies the horror in the image of the still bleeding dove being plucked.

The next poem "Les Feux du Bivouac" is perhaps the most allusive ~~ye~~ of all the poems in the sequence, and takes most of its value from the cumulative effect of which we have spoken. Consider the first verse-

"Les feux mouvants du bivouac
Eclairent des formes de rêve
Et le songe dans l'entrelacs
Des branches lentement s'élève" (1)

-the scene which the poet describes for us begins with an element of reality, the fires of the encampment, and then moves completely away from the real into the dreamlike and the unreal. The "formes de rêve" which are lit up by the fires, are probably the soldiers in the encampment, who are so described because they have lost their reality, not because they appear now lit up, now in shadow thrown by the flames, but because they are men at war- the embodiment of the destructive monsters of dreams, or of the subconscious mind. But the horror of what the poet is saying is completely subdued, and the surrender of reality to dream is seen as the smoke rising from among the branches on the fire.

The second verse brings out a little more, but still in a very allusive manner, the pain and horror of the situation, for although the men have become soldiers, and the poet among them, there remains memory to show them what they were before and to make them feel the pangs of regret-

(1) O.P. p. 250

"Voici les dédains du regret

Tout écorché comme une fraise

Le souvenir et le secret

Dont il ne reste que la braise

Note how in his choice of the strawberry as a comparison the poet conveys the idea of blood and suffering through the red of the berry (and also the word "écorché"), yet still retains a very stylised image which points to, rather than makes us feel, the full horror of the situation. So the memory and the secret of which only the glowing cinder remains are what men, including the poet, were before the war. Without the context of this sequence of poems it would be very hard to penetrate the secret of this poem, and the shadowy menace of the first stanza would remain much more vague than it appears to one who has read all of the poems in the sequence.

Finally, since we have already dealt with the poems "Les Grenadines Repentantes" and "L'Adieu du Cavalier", we come to "Tourbillon de Mouches". This poem is also very compressed and mysterious and undoubtedly grows in significance when read in the context of the whole series. The first two lines might refer simply to Apollinaire and to the young woman to whom the poems are addressed, be she Madeleine or Marie Laurencin, but the third line suddenly enlarges the scene to include the island of Lesbos before returning to the context of the First World War through an allusion to the barbed wire, which also becomes a wire linking the fleet in Lesbos to the present-

"Un cavalier va dans la plaine

La jeune fille pense à lui

Et cette flotte à Mytilène

Le fil de fer est là qui luit (1)

It is the ambiguity of the last line of the verse which points to the real subject of the poem - the eternal recurrence of the situation of the young woman waiting for her lover's return from the war. And once again the poet keeps the harsh reality of war in the background; the twentieth century war is barely alluded to in the final line, the merest hint, and the presence of the fleet in Lesbos does not have to be the Athenian fleet come to put down rebellion in the subject ^tate, yet the line has a certain menace which is most probably due to the cumulative effect of the sequence.

The second stanza brings together the soldier and the young woman, and uses a traditional symbol to describe their amorous involvement -

"Comme ils cueillaient la rose ardente

Leurs yeux tout à coup ont fleuri"

But the last two lines of the poem are much more mysterious -

"Mais quelle soleil la bouche errante

A qui la bouche avait souri"

-the disembodied mouths are free to be sun which shines on the soldier on the plain, i.e. Apollinaire in the present war, or on the fleet in Lesbos, and so the two people involved become unreal and eternal, victims of war from one century to the next. Is there here a clue to the title of the poem? Is the "tourbillon de mouches" the whirlwind of people swept away like flies by the wind of war? This could clearly be a preparation for the final poem in the sequence "L'Adieu du Cavalier" in which the soldier dies.

In this sequence of poems, then, the poet is quite clearly exploring the nature of Mankind as war transforms it, and although

the style of the poems is completely different from that of the poems discussed earlier in this section, the subject is the same (1) Love and war, sexual aggression and physical aggression are woven together and the complex result is seen as a predicament of the twentieth century man .

We now return to the more explicitly sexual imagery of other poems which Apollinaire wrote at this time, and which we must consider in the light of the foregoing sequence of poems. A poem such as "Le Chant d'Amour" is much less likely to be misunderstood if it is read as part of "Calligrammes" as a whole, than if it is taken on its own, but still in isolation it would be rash to accuse the poet of mistaking the nature of war on the basis of this poem.

The first few lines of the poem give no hint that the poem is in any way connected with the war-

"Voilà de quoi est fait le chant symphonique de l'amour

Il y a le chant de l'amour de jadis

Les bruits des baisers éperdus des amants illustres

Les cris d'amour des mortelles violées par les dieux" (2)

Only the last of the lines quoted introduces any element of violence but even this is on the level of isolated incidents and cannot be compared with the violence of war, being in any case a specifically sexual form of violence. However the next line turns the classical context into a very modern setting indeed-

"Les virilités des héros fabuleux érigées comme des pièces
contre avions"

(1) This whole sequence is to be compared to the poems of "Vitam Impendere Amori"; cf. the appropriate section of this chapter.

(2) O.P. p. 283

Unlike the image from "Fusée" which is discussed in this section (1), ^{this} image associates the violence of the anti-aircraft guns to the "virilités" of the heroes of the ancient world, and so for the moment the poem seems to be about the violence of love rather than the sexual aspect of war.

The next few lines continue the classical imagery and also maintain the associations of death and struggle which become quite inescapable in the lines-

"Il y a le cri des Sabines au moment de l'enlèvement

Il y a aussi les cris d'amour des félins dans les jungles "

The violence of war, the savagery of the love play of the jungle cats are part of the universal "chant d'amour" and the poet chooses to follow these lines with what is perhaps the least violent of all the lines in the poem before going on to describe war itself as an act of love-

"La rumeur sourde des sèves montant dans les plantes tropicales

Le tonnerre des artilleries qui accomplissent le terrible

amour des peuples"

This description of war cannot simply be seen as an extension of the image of the cannon as a phallus although the poet has expressed it in this way. In one line, just as in "Chef de Section", the poet is reversing the terms of the poem and saying that if violence is part of love then love is part of violence, and consequently war is an act of love.

We reject any suggestion that Apollinaire is simply using the war to provide himself with an easy shock image, and in so doing is

(1) Cf. P. 318

trivialising a conflict in which millions lost their lives.

Surely we cannot fail to see that this image, by extending, literally, the image of rape to the national level, is trying to bring out fundamental truth about human nature which is that there is something of the sadist in everyone. And perhaps he is also saying that war recurs so regularly in human history as to be almost as inevitable to peoples as the sexual act is to individuals.

Let us look now, then, at "Merveille de la Guerre" which of all Apollinaire's war poems, except possibly "Guerre" (1), might seem most liable to lay Apollinaire open to the charge of insensitivity to the war. Once again we find a first line which seems to look upon the exploding shells in a way which disregards their destructive power-

"Que c'est beau ces fusées qui illuminent la nuit" (2)

-and the following lines comparing them to elegant ladies confirms this impression, but only a few lines later you read-

"Ces danseuses surdorées appartiennent à tous les temps
et à toutes les races

Elles accouchent brusquement d'enfants qui n'ont que le
temps de mourir"

Clearly the image of children dying at birth expresses fully the destruction of war and horror which the poet feels as a witness of it. And in the light of the exploding shells the poet sees the image of the temptress, dancing; is it not an image which betrays the poet's concern with the false seduction of the glamorous life of the soldier, as well as an indication of his bitterness about the woman who has led him on and then rejected him, so making him

(1) O.P. p. 228

(2) O.p. p. 271

profoundly miserable?

How, after this cruel image, can we fail to see the repetition, or near repetition, of the first line as bitterly ironic. And if the following two lines look at the exploding shells as lights in the sky removed from the instruments of death which they really are, then the final line of this verse reminds us that in spite of the beauty of the explosions men are being killed by them-

"Pourtant c'est aussi beau que si la vie sortait des mourants"

The poem begins to take on a pattern which underlines heavily the irony of all the lines which accept the scene as one of visual beauty, for each verse beginning in this way ends on a clear note of horror, as does the fourth verse-

"La terre a faim et voici son festin de Balthasar cannibale"

This is now carried over into the beginning of the next section and the guilt for the destruction of so many human beings is transferred from the Earth almost unobtrusively by the use of the pronoun "on", to men-

"Qui aurait dit qu'on pût être à ce point anthropophage"

Perhaps the tone of the line as well as the use of the coldly scientific "anthropophage" have distracted attention from the meaning of the line. Certainly the following lines would have contributed to this, but in this innocent tone lies a very genuine reaction - how can one believe that the human race has such a capacity for self-destruction? Are the lines which follow not, in their absence of real emotional reaction, an indication that there can be no human reaction to equal the scale of the destruction, and therefore the only way to express the horror of the situation is to turn away from any attempt at direct expression? Perhaps this seems too

determined a defence of Apollinaire but it seems to us that the marvel of war is the spectacular scene of exploding flares and shells, which we have already indicated can only be seen as such when one is prepared to forget their deadly function, and so the poet is expressing his unbelief in the scene of death by concentrating on the aesthetically pleasing lights of the explosives.

However, the end of the poem, beginning with the passage "Mais j'ai coulé..." becomes something quite different from the rest of the poem--

"Je suis dans la tranchée de première ligne et cependant je

suis partout ou plutôt je commence à être partout

C'est moi qui commence cette chose des siècles à venir

Ce sera plus long à réaliser que non la fable d'Icare volant"

These lines appear as an extension of the sexual metaphor applied to war; Apollinaire sees as the consequence of the "terrible amour des peuples" the birth of a new kind of man, and feels himself to the first of these. Of course, one can no more interpret in an explicit fashion the lines concerning the poet's ubiquity than one could have deduced the form of the aeroplane from the Fable of Icarus. Nonetheless these lines, and the subsequent statements which close the poem, do illustrate another aspect of Apollinaire's attitude to the war and his reasons for using sexual imagery in his descriptions of it-- he felt that the slaughter was some kind of purifying experience through which mankind would eventually attain a new era (1). But as the last lines of the poem reveal, if Apollinaire felt himself to be the first of these new men, then he also

(1) Compare the ending of the poem "Guerre" O.P. p. 228

felt himself to be the only one, for the time being, and so the poem ends on this note of his ubiquity which does not quite liberate him from his solitude--

"Je lègue à l'avenir l'histoire de Guillaume Apollinaire
Qui fut à la guerre et sut être partout

• • • •

Et ce serait sans doute bien plus beau
Si je pouvais supposer que toutes ces choses dans lesquelles
je suis partout

Pouvaient m'occuper aussi

Mais dans ce sens il n'y a rien de fait

Car si je suis partout à cette heure il n'y a cependant que moi
qui suis en moi"

On the surface it seems that it is really only another aspect of simultanism which Apollinaire is offering here, but it is an increased intensity of the phenomenon to which the poet is referring, and looking forward to the generalisation of this mode of consciousness, which he feels for the moment to be uniquely his, and which, generalised will undoubtedly grow to something much greater but for the moment beyond our comprehension.

We now pass on to a consideration of the poem "Chant de l'Honneur" (1), which sets out quite clearly many of the ideas which we have traced in the poems analysed up to this point. Thus for example the poet speaks the following lines--

"Le Christ n'est donc venu qu'en vain parmi les hommes
Si des fleuves de sang limitent les royaumes
Et même de l'amour on sait la cruauté"

(1) O.P. p. 304

-here we have a quite explicit statement which might be taken as an apology for the kind of poetry which the poet has been writing about the war. Perhaps, also, these lines are the confirmation of the irrelevance, for Apollinaire, of religion, in particular Christianity, to the situation of twentieth century man, such as he tried to express it in "Zone". How can one say that Apollinaire was insensitive to the suffering of the war when one reads these lines-

"Depuis dix jours au fond d'un couloir trop étroit
 Dans les éboulements et la boue et le froid
 Parmi la chair qui souffre et dans la pourriture
 Anxieux nous regardons la route de Tahure"

-the sincerity of such lines is not to be called in question, their simplicity is the simplicity of truth stated without ornament, and the next three lines surely cannot be dismissed as self-pity:-

"J'ai plus que les trois coeurs des poulpes pour souffrir
 Vos coeurs sont tous en moi je sens chaque blessure
 O mes soldats souffrants ô blessés à mourir"

We cannot now say that there is anything trivialising about the lines which are spoken by the trench itself-

"O jeunes gens je m'offre à vous comme une épouse
 Mon amour est puissant j'aime jusqu'à la mort
 Tapie au fond du sol je vous guette jalouse
 Et mon corps n'est en tout qu'un long baiser qui mord"

Here the image beginning with a visual similarity goes far beyond this point to develop the sexual nature of war, and the violent nature of love from which the poet's lines concerning the coming of Christ and the cruelty of love follow. What the poet now offers as

the goal of humanity is a devotion to beauty.

"C'est pourquoi faut au moins penser à la beauté

Seule chose ici-bas qui n'est jamais mauvaise "

But for Apollinaire this choice of beauty as the greatest good was
no aesthetic withdrawal into a credo of art for art's sake. In

"Les Collines" he states quite clearly-

"C'est de souffrance et de bonté

Que sera faite la beauté

Plus parfaite que n'était celle

Qui venait des proportions" (1)

And so the poet speaking at the end of this poem says-

"O poètes des temps à venir ô chanteurs

Je chante la beauté de toutes nos douleurs"

Before leaving this poem to continue and conclude our ^aanalysis of the
blend of eroticism and violence in Apollinaire's poetry, we must point
out that in the final speech given to the poet in this poem, Apolli-
naire seems to place trust in the perspective given by the future to
find the sense behind the war, and so perhaps reveals that basically
he could not believe that men could be so evil as to slaughter
themselves in such numbers, without there being a purpose so sublime
as to outweigh millions of deaths. Perhaps this element of naivety
is also present in all or most of the war poems, but it must not be
taken as the explanation for all that is not immediately understood
in them.

If the analysis of the sexual imagery of the war poems reveals
that this imagery is much more profound than many have suspected,
then this is often the case also with the violent, military imagery

(1) O.P. p. 176

of the erotic love poems. But the depth of the latter is of a different kind. Not only is it intended to bring out the violent nature of love and of sexual relations, it is frequently a kind of exorcism of the intensity of the poet's longing. This can be seen quite clearly in the poem XLI to Lou in which the poet runs through many of the variations of the erotic situation, some no doubt inspired by memory, and concludes the list with the explosion of a shell which kills himself and which he identifies with Lou. The intensity of the list is built up by the repetition at the beginning of each line of "Je voudrais .." until the final explosion destroys all-

"Je voudrais que tu sois un petit garçon pour être ton précepteur
 Je voudrais que tu sois la nuit pour nous aimer dans les ténèbres
 Je voudrais que tu sois ma vie pour être par toi seule
 Je voudrais que tu sois un obus boche pour me tuer d'un soudain
 amour"(1)

The violence of this passage is not of course limited to the image of the exploding shell; the manner in which the poet builds up to a climax which he suddenly resolves with the minimum of warning to the reader that he is going to do so, is a familiar part of many of Apollinaire's pre-war poems, as well as being quite fundamental to the success of all of Apollinaire's shock images; consider, to end on the same poem as we began, the image from "Fête"-

"Deux fusants
 Rose éclatement
 Comme deux seins que l'on dégrafe"

-the original version of the poem gave the first two lines as only one, but by breaking the first line into two parts the poet not only

(1) O.P. p. 446

postpones the surprise of his comparison, he also underlines the rhythm, broken by the rhyme "fusants/éclatement" which makes the next line even more unexpected, because rhythmically different, and also because the return to the normal rhythm coincides with the departure into the erotic vision.

So although we find that often in the poems written during the war Apollinaire uses more regular forms and techniques, this is most frequently a result of the wish to dash off a quick letter in verse and not really an indication that he was abandoning the techniques which he had developed before the war. (This we shall see quite clearly in our next section.) We also see that the most successful of these poems depend on the techniques of violence (rather than the actual violence of war) even if in other poems these techniques play a more reduced role.

CHAPTER THREE : SECTION EIGHT

CASE D'ARMONS AND LUEURS DES TIRS

In this section we propose to go back to the poems from the sections "Case d'Armons" and "Lueurs des Tirs" which we have not already analysed, in order to show the continuity of Apollinaire's ideas and development from the pre-war period to the period in which he wrote the last poems of "Calligrammes". From this point of view, perhaps the most important poem in "Case d'Armons" is "Toujours", and we shall analyse this poem in detail.

This poem, dated May 1915, can be seen as a résumé of the poet's experiments which the war had, to a certain extent, interrupted. In fact, the first lines of the poem may well mark the poet's attitude towards experimental poetry, and may account for his continued search for new means of writing poems even after he had evolved a style as radically different from that of traditional writing as he had done in "Les Fiançailles"-

" **Toujours**

Nous irons plus loin sans avancer jamais" (1)

It is not difficult to resolve the paradox of these lines in terms of a statement about writing poetry, so that what Apollinaire is saying is that no matter what progress is made in how a poem is written, the problems of writing poetry will remain and in fact what poets are doing is running in order to stay on the same spot. It is not stated here, but it is clear that the poet does not believe that poetry can be written in the language of the past, and consequently it is necessary for poets to continue to try to advance even

(1) O.P. p. 237

though this does not in fact carry them forward (1).

The next passage presents no degree of continuity with the first lines, although it seems at first to do so in terms of motion--

"Et de planète en planète
De nébuleuse en nébuleuse
Le Don Juan des mille et trois comètes
Même sans bouger de la terre
Cherche les forces neuves
Et prend au sérieux les fantômes"

We cannot say that there is a change in the imagery since the first lines do not really contain an image, but what the poet does do is to surprise the reader by the choice of imagery in the second passage;

(1) Cf. T.S. Eliot's lines from "East Coker"--

"So here I am, in the middle way, having had twenty years -
Twenty years largely wasted, the years of l'entre deux guerres
Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt
Is wholly a new start, and a different kind of failure
Because one has only learnt to get the better of words
For the thing one no longer has to say, or the way in which
One is no longer disposed to say it....."

The comparison is illuminating for both poems were written by men who had never ceased to experiment in poetic form, yet Apollinaire could never have been, and is not here, so pessimistic as Eliot.

we should not overlook the fact that this poem is one of a group of poems all more or less concerned with the war, and in this context the opening statement must seem to refer to the seemingly unending advance, yard by yard, of the armies engaged in the battle. But the second passage changes this preconception completely, the movement is from planet to planet, from nebula to nebula. It is difficult to say how literally the contemporary reader would have interpreted this image as one of the scientific progress of mankind. Perhaps it would have seemed such an image in 1915, or rather 1918, when the volume was published; after all, the development of the aeroplane must have fired the imagination of the most ordinary of men, and the taste for the fiction of Jules Verne must be some indication of the way in which the popular imagination was ready to conceive of space flight. One might also mention the enormous success of Georges Méliès film "Le Voyage Dans La Lune", made in 1907, which must also point to the beginnings of the cult of the future so prevalent today as to allow us to read this image almost as something that is not ^uusual. (1)

Scarcely, however, does this image form in the reader's mind than the poet transforms it by introducing the person of Don Juan to whom he ascribes a rather curious attribute- "des mille et trois comètes". In so doing, the poet transforms a future reality, which must nonetheless be created by the imagination, i.e. space flight, into an unreality, dependent on the imagination, i.e. the presence of a character from fiction in space. Why has the poet chosen to use Don Juan? Perhaps because he stands as a symbol of defiance of

- (1) In fact Méliès' film cannot be taken seriously, it is really a farce, but it still serves to point to the public's readiness to accept the idea of space travel as a possible human invention.

God (hence the reference to him as looking for new forces) and also because his unfailing attraction for women is transformed into an attraction for comets, which we may see as illustrations of the poem's opening lines since they are in continual motion yet always return to the same places. Thus Don Juan is a symbol of the poet, but the vision of him travelling from planet to planet, and from nebula to nebula is immediately destroyed by the following line which tells us that he accomplishes his task without moving from the Earth. The familiar pattern of conflicting images is appearing as the source of the poem's significance, for here we seem to have a passage analogous to the section of "Les Fiançailles" which begins "J'observe le repos du dimanche". The movement involved is clearly that of the imagination, which might be the comets themselves, travelling through space from star to planet etc. Even if one does not make this association, one is prompted to ask why the figure one thousand and three was chosen. Perhaps the answer is that it is more than, but near enough to, the figure of one thousand and one nights, so that this figure is called to mind and with it the situation of Sheherazade, whose feat of telling stories for this time is not only an example of the great powers of the imagination, but also an example of progress which does not really carry one forward. But the powers of the imagination of Don Juan are greater, yet restricted also.

The object of Don Juan's search is, then, new forces, and thus the last line of the passage suggests that to find these new forces Don Juan must take phantoms seriously. The phantoms may stand either for figments of the imagination, in which case the route to the new

forces lies through the imagination, or the phantoms may be symbols of the ridiculous, in which case Apollinaire is saying that poets ought to take seriously things which they have up to now regarded as beneath them. Consider the following quotation from "L'Esprit Nouveau et les Poètes"-

"Où est le temps où le mouchoir de Desdémone paraissait d'un ridicule inadmissible? Aujourd'hui le ridicule même est poursuivi, on cherche à s'en emparer et il a sa place dans la poésie parce qu'il fait partie de la vie au même titre que l'héroïsme et tout ce qui nourrissait jadis l'enthousiasme des poètes" (1)

The last line is, however, ambiguous, for it was the phantom who came to lead Don Juan to his doom, and therefore he has good reason to take phantoms seriously. But this is simply another level to the statement that poets should look at things to which they paid no attention before.

The next passage begins with a line which seems to be a twentieth century version of "Où sont les neiges d'antan"-

"Et tant d'univers s'oublient"

-the cry of despair that everything disappears with the passage of time. But the following lines completely reverse this impression and we find the poet walling for the ability to forget-

"Quels sont les grands oublieurs

Qui donc saura nous faire oublier telle ou telle partie
du monde

Où est le Christophe Colomb à qui l'on devra l'oubli d'un
continent"

(1) O.C.T. 3 p. 905

of the ways, in which Apollinaire's imagination worked. Consider the first few lines of the poem, bearing in mind its title-

"Ton sourire m'attire comme
 Pourrait m'attirer une fleur
 Photographie tu es le champignon brun
 De la forêt
 Qu'est sa beauté" (1)

The initial comparison comes as no surprise to us, one presumes that the photograph is of a woman, and so the comparison to a flower becomes^a fairly standard compliment. But the next line seems to abstract the colour of the photograph from the other aspects of its appearance- one must remember the brown and creamy tones of the photographs of this period- in order to compare it to a mushroom, which, with the flower still in our minds, does not seem such a compliment. The effect of this image is to reflect back upon our initial ideas about the photograph and to lead us to think that perhaps it is not the photograph of a woman to which Apollinaire is referring at all, but to a photograph as a photograph. Thus the affirmation that the mushroom is something after all, in fact the beauty of the forest, takes on quite a different meaning, when applied to the photograph as a photograph, rather than to the photograph as a representation^o of a woman. The tiny mushroom among the trees, the beauty of the forest, this is the photograph among a host of visual memories, clear, fixed, and of a near uniform colour - something well defined. But the mushroom also is something that grows in the humus on the forest floor, and which therefore is something that is growing from

(1) O.P. p. 257

remains of the trees, dead leaves and so on, and as such is left over from the trees as a memory is left over from an experience.

The next lines refer to the whites of the photograph, but also seem to abstract the fixed quality of it and transform this into an image-

"Les blancs y sont

Un clair de lune

Dans un jardin pacifique

Plein d'eaux vives et de jardiniers endiablés

The moonlight and the peaceful garden are certainly not elements of the real photograph, since this was technically impossible at that time; therefore we must conclude that they are an extension of the atmosphere of the photograph (as well as arising from the colour) and this atmosphere, this stillness is destroyed in the next line by the "eaux vives" and also by the "jardiniers endiablés" with its suggestion of frenzied movements. This is caught to some extent in the next line, which again seems to derive from one quality of the photograph - the slightly hazy quality which becomes the smoke of desire-

"Photographie tu es la fumée de l'ardeur

Qu'est sa beauté"

-and this shadow, this smoke, of ardour is described as the beauty of the woman, in the same way that the mushroom was the beauty of the forest; the indication, the hint, or perhaps the memory, is the real beauty. The imagery points to a common idea, namely that the photograph is the indication, the memory of something else, and it is this element of permanence, or seeming permanence, which

is for the poet, the beauty of the object, or person.

This is continued in the final lines of the poem, as first the poet synthesises the elements which he has separated, the browns and the whites, and gives an image of the total effect of the photograph-

"Et il y a en toi

Photographie

Des tons alanguis

On y entend

Une mélodie"

This photograph is half way between the reality of what it depicts and say a purely mental image of this reality, as it lacks the clarity and real colouring of the one, and yet is more fixed and truer than the other, just as a recitative is half way between the ordinary quality of speech and that of singing.

The poem's final image lends a temporal dimension to the poem, which is better understood if one is aware of the theme of the sun and shadow which runs through all of Apollinaire's poetry from the beginning to the end of his career-

"Photographie tu es l'ombre

Du Soleil

Qu'est sa beauté"

The shadow is the past, the sun the present, this is still clear from the context of the poem, just as the photograph is the preserved past of some moment in time, and to say that the shadow is the sun's beauty, is to say that it is the ephemeral which makes things beautiful; the beauty of the present, the sun, is the past, the shadow, which must also, of course, be memory and hence the photograph is a kind of prolongation of the past incident which does not

thereby lose its ephemeral nature, but rather keeps it all the more poignantly.

And so the photograph's smile, which leads us to think that the poet is talking about someone rather than about the photograph itself in the first two lines, compared to a flower, is not just a compliment, but a statement of the quality which both possess of a prolongation which does not destroy the essentially ephemeral nature of the reality. The flower achieves this quality by being an echo of every flower, and of delicacy and fragility, but each flower fades and dies in a short time and so a flower is both eternal and ephemeral, like the reality caught in a photograph.

In this poem we see Apollinaire's imagination dismembering, as it were, an object in order to find associations which might not at first strike one as obvious and which are even, perhaps, unlikely and therefore surprising. We also find certain deliberate conflicts within the poem, such as the suggestion that the poem is about the photograph of someone before the images make it clear that the nature of the photograph itself is the subject of the poem, and within these conflicts the poet is attempting to find a way of evoking the ambiguous nature of the photograph, which is a picture, or representation of someone, and yet is not either that person, or really a memory of that person. Similarly the contrast between the stillness of the moonlight and the peaceful garden and the movement of the water and the gardeners suggest the paradoxical nature of the photograph which evokes both stillness and motion in presenting an arrested gesture.

The following quotation from one of Apollinaire's letters to his "marraine de guerre" will serve, perhaps, to illustrate how

aware he was of this dichotomy between the ephemeral nature of human experience and the strong desire to prolong for ever certain moments in time-

"Je n'ai jamais désiré de quitter pour ma part le lieu où je vivais et j'ai toujours désiré que le présent quel qu'il fût perdurât. Rien ne détermine plus de mélancolie chez moi que cette fuite du temps. Elle est en désaccord si formel avec mon sentiment, mon identité, qu'elle est la source même de ma poésie" (1).

Thus not only the photograph, but also the image of surprise becomes for him the perfect illustration of his feelings, for both are essential aspects of the nature of human experience, and both partake of the tension which he claims is the source of his poetry.

We come now to the "Chant de l'Horizon en Champagne", in which we find images suggestive of the same mental patterns in the poet's mind and work. The beginning of the poem is an illustration of how the poet's imagination transforms an object from one thing to another, in this case relying on its visual appearance to link the objects to which it is compared-

"Voici le tétin rose de l'euphorbe verruquée

Voici le nez des soldats invisibles" (1)

Faced with lines like these one thinks of statements which Apollinaire has made such as the following-

"Variée comme un enchanteur qui sait varier ses métamorphoses" (2)

-and one becomes aware of Apollinaire's conception of the magical powers of imagination which can transform one object into another, as the photograph became the mushroom in the forest, and as here a

(1) O.P. p. 265

(2) Chef de Section, O.P. p. 307

flower becomes a breast and the noses of unseen soldiers. This marks a certain evolution of the poet's confidence in his powers, for if one thinks back to "Les Fiançailles" and the sections concerning the role of the senses and the poet as a liar (1), one finds that the poet is no longer afraid of allowing his imagination to change external reality, nor is he afraid that the work of his imagination will be contaminated by the inability of his senses to shut themselves off from the external world. It is as though the poet had become more aware of the power of the word, and realised that as far as the reader is concerned the words "euphorbe verruquée" represent no more a reality than do the words "tétin rose" since in both cases the words act upon the imagination of the reader to produce an image, which may or may not have its roots in remembered experience, but which springs essentially from the poem itself, and which consequently may be metamorphosed by the imagination of the poet.

So we find the poet exploiting his ability to surprise the reader, in fact to do violence to his imagination, by offering him "le tétin rose" which he then changes to "l'euphorbe verruquée" and then changes again to "le nez des soldats invisibles". Thus we find the poet proclaiming in "Les Collines"-

"Voici le temps de la magie

Il s'en revient attendez-vous

A des milliards de prodiges" (2)

-and we shall see that this quality of the imagination is now a

(1) Cf. Chapter two, section four.

(2) O.P. p. 172

constant in his work. Clearly the poet's fascination with the figure of the magician is related to, not to say at the base of, this concept of the poet as one who has the power to change the nature of things, and as one who^{se} metamorphoses, that it to say those wrought by him, astonish but do not necessarily cause delight. Hence, as we have indicated, his frequent use of the exploding shell as an image, for he saw this as an image of his poetry.

Perhaps for Apollinaire this attitude to experience meant that in his view all appearances were deceptive, all things only masks, but not masks which concealed the true face, rather masks which could be lifted to reveal other masks. The theme of the mask itself is not an apparent one in Apollinaire's poetry, nor are there many images which like the following explicitly refer to a mask-

"Un chien jappait l'obus miaule
 La lueur muette a jailli
 A savoir si la guerre est drôle
 Les masques n'ont pas tressailli"

-and in this case it is quite probable that the image arises from the fact that the soldiers in the trenches wore masks to protect them against poison gases. It is however open to us, indeed we should be insensitive not to make this association, to see that the masks may be the faces of the soldiers who are unmoved by the explosion of a distant shell (distant because the light of the explosion is described as silent). So the indifference or lack of visible emotions seems to reply to the line "A savoir si la guerre est drôle" that not only is war not funny, but it numbs the emotions till one

is no longer capable of response. This, however, is revealed in the next line to be a mask-

"Mais quel fou rire sous le masque

Blancheur éternelle d'ici

Où la colombe porte un casque

Et l'acier s'envole aussi"

-and the reaction to the explosion is wild laughter. But even this is not what it seems, for the lines following show that there is no real opposition between the appearances which seem to contradict one another, since the dove there wears a helmet (made of steel) and the shells (again metal) can fly. But as the dove is a symbol of peace and the shell an obvious image of war, the image reveals war and peace to be the same thing, and this undoubtedly because each is only a human reaction, like laughter and indifference, and as such only a mask. Thus the line "Blancheur éternelle d'ici" must refer not only to the chalk soil of Champagne, exposed in the trenches and in the shell holes, but also to the sameness of everything. Here we find a parallel to Apollinaire's treatment of war as sex and sex as war; he is refusing the neat categories of good and bad human behaviour.

From this position the lines which near the end of the poem are spoken by an infantryman follow quite naturally-

"Tandis que nous n'y sommes pas

Que de filles deviennent belles

Voici l'hiver et pas à pas

Leur beauté s'éloignera d'elles

O Lueurs soudaines des tirs

Cette beauté que j'imagine

Faute d'avoir des souvenirs

Tire de vous son origine

Car elle n'est rien que l'ardeur

De la bataille violente"

The infantryman seeing the flashes of light coming from the explosion of shells sees them as the beauty of girls whom he cannot see because they are not there. Therefore this beauty becomes the beauty of the shells with their overtones of destruction and violence, and this is what the beauty of the girls is too, for that soldier at that moment, as this is the aspect of that experience which he is seeing. The last two lines of the last quatrain then tells us that this is what is inspiring Apollinaire's war poetry (the lines are spoken by the horizon) -

"Et de la terrible lueur

Il s'est fait une muse ardente"

The importance of this concept to the exploitation of the techniques of violence will be seen immediately, for if the momentary outward aspect of the scene is to be its truth or essence, which it is for Apollinaire, then the poet's assumption of the power to wave his wand and change the appearance of an object, is, or rather becomes, the ability to create new truths or essences, and therefore "La rencontre fortuite sur une table de dissection d'une machine à coudre et d'un parapluie" (1) to quote a famous example, becomes the source of this kind of poetry although by an act of the poet's will. Thus the poet, seizing upon the unusual, which is an

(1) Lautréamont : Les Chants de Maldoror", Chant sixième I, O.C.

appearance, uses this as an image, and possibly transforms it into something else, another appearance, thus revealing the ephemeral yet valid nature of all experience, which conforms not only to the statement quoted above concerning the desire to make eternal the essentially ephemeral, but also the line, eliminated from "Les Fiançailles", surely because it is much too explicit-

"Puis j'ai reconnu que chaque moment porte en soi sa propre perfection" (1)

Without this concept of the nature of experience such a poem as "Océan de Terre" could never have been written, and it is to this poem that we now turn to continue our analysis of Apollinaire's imagery. The first lines of the poem plunge us immediately into the world of the enchanter, where nothing retains a permanent identity and where our imaginations are definitely prevented from taking hold on the poem by the replacement of one object by another-

"J'ai bâti une maison au milieu de l'Océan

Ses fenêtres sont les fleuves qui s'écoulent de mes yeux

Des poulpes grouillent partout où se tiennent les murailles

Entendez battre leur triple coeur et leur bec cogner aux vitres"(2)

The impossible feat that is mentioned in the first line is not quite as surprising to the reader as it might be because the title of the poem warns them that the ocean is a metaphor. Nonetheless, within the poem itself the metaphor is assumed and the house is situated in the Ocean, not on land. The second line is a bewildering short-circuit of images which destroy any element of reality attaching to the house because of the title. The windows of the house become

(1) Cf. Chapter two, section four, pp. 98-100

(2) O.P. p. 268

rivers which flow from the poet's eyes, and so the windows, in a way, becomes the eyes also. When we analyse these metamorphoses we find that they are really expansions of the basic metaphor of the title; imagine a house in the ocean, and consequently a house partaking of the nature of the sea as an ordinary house partakes of the nature of the land; could we not say of this house that the rivers flowing into the sea are like the streams of light flowing into the windows of a house on land? Apollinaire has compressed the image. So with the second part of this image, the rivers flowing from the poet's eyes, might they not be the streams of light striking the eyes which are here reversed because the poet's glance instead of seeing what these light patterns offer it, is imposing his own interpretation of the landscape in the description of it as an ocean? And so the window is revealed to be not only that which allows light in but also that which allows the poet to see out. The situation which the poet transforms must, then, be something like this- the house is a trench which he has dug in the middle of a flat but churned-up expanse of land, and since he is in the trench looking out, his eyes are the windows of the houses, but, given the initial metaphor of the title, the streams of light are transformed into rivers. However, the identification of the windows with the rivers, is then the identification of the light with that through which it passes, or with that upon which it acts, therefore the image is a way of saying that the eye is what it sees and, conversely, what is seen by the eye is the eye itself- which is a commentary on the metaphor "Océan de Terre", since this is the eye transforming the land into an ocean, i.e. transforming what

it sees into what it, or the poet since he controls it, wants to see.

This establishment of the metaphor allows the poet to place octopuses beyond the walls of the trench/house, since these walls are not earth but water, and in so doing he establishes the hostility of the soil to his presence, and the poem becomes a statement of the involvement with a hostile environment. This is clearly borne out in the striking of beaks against the windows and the sense of alien presences which is given by the "Entendez battre leur triple coeur". The land has become the ocean, and the poet, rather than a sailor on the surface, is completely displaced from his normal environment by being submerged in it.

The next section of the poem is marked by a strong change of rhythm, suggesting perhaps the regular explosion of bombs dropped from the aeroplane- it may have been the sight of the earth flung up from the explosions like water splashing up when something is thrown into it that suggested the basic metaphor to the poet -

"Maison humide

Maison ardente

Saison rapide

Saison qui chante

Les avions pondent des oeufs"

Of course, these lines may also be intended to suggest the beating of the triple hearts of the octopuses, but the noises made by the octopuses, whether beating of hearts or striking of beaks against the windows, could also be the noises of the bombs interpreted by the poet in terms of the metaphor of the ocean.

But in order that the appearance of the aeroplane should not destroy the unreality of the poem by being too ^eradily understood as something outside the metaphor the poet describes it as laying eggs, and so deprives it of much of its menace.

The next two lines tie up the noise of the explosion with the noises made by the octopuses through a pun -

" Attention on va jeter l'ancre

Attention à l'encre que l'on jette"

The aeroplanes throwing out the anchor become the octopus squirting out their ink. As to how the anchor came into it, one should not, in our opinion look for any other explanation than that the bombs thrown from the aeroplanes are made of metal and so evoke the comparison with the metal anchors being thrown overboard from ships. Once this is seen then the ink, which links the image to the octopuses, can be interpreted as being the clouds of smoke coming from ^{the} the explosions or the earth thrown up by them, or as the ink (i.e. words) that the poet is throwing out - ^etherefore his interpretation of the scene - which does require our careful attention.

The next line is very ambiguous; it could refer to almost anything which has been mentioned in the poem so far, except the bombs the only things which are coming from the sky, as the mood of the verb clearly refers to something which is not in fact coming from the sky-

"Il serait bon que vous vinssiez du ciel"

-the line could be addressed to anyone, perhaps it is addressed to death, which the poet does not name because it would destroy the unreality of the poem. Perhaps it is a wish that Christ would

descend again to earth, although in this case there is no capital letter to indicate that the "vous" is addressed to Christ or God? The next line is also very mysterious-

"Le chèvrefeuille du ciel grimpe"

-and perhaps it, too, is a compressed image through which the poet is saying that the sky, and possibly God, is beyond the reach of man, since the honeysuckle of the sky, i.e. its colour, climbs, that is to say moves away from the men on the ground. The next line then reminds us of the hostility which the poet faces on the ground-

"Les poulpes terrestres palpitent"

-and the following line makes a comparison between the trenches which the soldier dig, which up till now have been the house, suggesting safety and refuge, and graves dug by the people who will occupy them -

"Et puis nous sommes tant et tant à être nos propres fossoyeurs"

The poem then ends on this note of despair, almost, the earth disappearing entirely in favour of the ocean and its unceasing movements -

"Pâles poulpes des vagues crayeuses ô poulpes aux becs pâles

Autour de la maison il y a cet océan que tu connais

Et qui ne se repose jamais"

Clearly the success of the poem depends upon the poet's ability to be a magician and to change one thing into another; not only the earth into the ocean, but also the bombs into eggs, and the explosions into clouds of ink, for in this way he prevents us from reacting in a conventional manner to a poem about soldiers in trenches being

bomb^{ed} and instead presents us with a poem which makes us feel the hostility of the earth itself. This surely makes clear the importance of the surprise concentrated in the initial lines of the poem, for it is necessary for the poet to remove us first from the world we know before he can reveal the real situation, which even then expresses in terms as unreal as possible.

Although we find that the compression of images in the second line is not a usual technical device employed by Apollinaire (1), we nevertheless see that it is a variation of the techniques of surprise which are familiar to us from his other poems; it is simply that here the metamorphoses are more rapid than elsewhere.

The final impression that these poems leave is of an attempt to enlarge the technical means at the poet's disposal - as well as a refusal to be overwhelmed by the horror of the war - this is particularly noticeable in "Océan de Terre". But also there is the very clear basis of the techniques of violence - strange juxtapositions, instant metamorphoses, the desire to astonish and to take by surprise - on which the poet builds.

There is not, however, the success of the later poems of "Calligrammes" and this is surely because of the inevitably narrow limits within the poet's imagination was working. The new world so often heralded, would not come while the armies of Europe were still engaged in destroying one another.

- (1) It does however remind us of the compression of an image like : "Colonnes de clins d'yeux qui fuyaient aux éclairs".

Cf. O.P. p.91 & Ch.2 sect. L

CHAPTER THREE : SECTION NINE

OBUS COULEUR DE LUNE

In this section we shall be analysing the poems from the section entitled "Obus Couleur de Lune", principally "Exercice", "IL Y A ", "L'Espionne", "Simultanéités", and "Du coton dans les Oreilles". We shall show that there is a return, in these poems, or rather in some of them, to another early characteristic of Apollinaire's style, namely the poem which seems to prolong itself long after one has finished reading it. This is not simply a question of a memorable poem, but a quite definite technical device which Apollinaire exploits, as can be readily seen in the first of the poems which we shall analyse here - "Exercice".

We begin by quoting the entire poem since it is only three verses of four lines each-

"Vers un village de l'arrière
S'en allaient quatre bombardiers
Ils étaient couverts de poussière
Depuis la tête jusqu'aux pieds

Ils regardaient la vaste plaine
En parlant entre eux du passé
Et ne se retournaient qu'à peine
Quand un obus avait toussé

Tous quatre de classe seize
Parlaient d'antan non d'avenir
Ainsi se prolongeait l'ascèse
Qui les exerçait à mourir" (1)

The description of the scene is simple, there are no images which take the reader by surprise, and even the choice of the word "toussé" to describe the explosion of the shell fits the context so well that no-one could object to it. The last verse hints that the soldiers are young and so their talk of the past instead of the future would seem strange were it not for the fact that their condition leads us to think that they are returning from the trenches and hence know that they face death as part of their daily lives. Thus the poet describes their looking to the past as an asceticism which prepares them for death - surely it is this because it is a turning away from the future which would only evoke hope in their minds.

The poem presents no difficulties of interpretation, it is to the rhythm and structure that we must look in order to find the quality which particularly interest us. The quatrain of octosyllables with the rhyme scheme a b a b is not at all uncommon in Apollinaire's work, and many critics have pointed out that it is the form of much popular poetry and song, and indeed it is precisely this quality which Apollinaire succeeds in capturing and which lends such charm to many of his poems. What particularly interests us here is that this form is a repetitive one, each verse lending on, rhythmically, to the next, and Apollinaire, in using this style does not make the rhythmical adjustment to the last line, which the popular song usually does, in order to bring his poem to an end. Instead, he uses the same rhythmic unit suggesting thereby that there is more to follow; the effect of this is to continue the music of the poem into the silence which comes after the last line and thus leave the impression of something

half-remembered, half-forgotten.

This musical side to Apollinaire's poetry is, as we have said, present in his work from the earliest onward, and Mme. Durry has analysed in some detail the similarities which it bears to the poetry of Verlaine, to that of Régnier and others, so it is not our intention here to say much about it; but we remark upon the presence of such a poem as "Exercice" at this stage in Apollinaire's work, precisely because this poem, owing nothing to the techniques of violence, shows that Apollinaire was capable of writing in another style, of returning to earlier aspects of himself, as it were, and also because we shall see him combining to great effect these two aspects of his own poetry in "Les Collines".

"L'Espionne" also reveals the poet's tendency to return to this style but also shows his trick of turning images so as to reveal different aspects of them, although here he does so in a more gentle manner. Thus the first verse -

"Pâle espionne de l'amour
Ma mémoire à peine fidèle
N'eut pour observer cette belle
Forteresse qu'une heure un jour" (1)

-exploits fully the ambiguities arising from the lack of punctuation and the line breaks. We read the first two lines and it seems as though it is memory which is the pale spy of love, and then the third line suggests that perhaps this is not so although it by no means offers a strong contradiction. In the same way the break between the adjective "belle" and the noun it qualifies "forteresse" leaves the reader's imagination time to make of "belle"

(1) O.P. p. 282

a noun before the rhythm carries on to bring out the continuation of the military metaphor. The phrase "une heure un jour" also suggests the tricks which the mind and memory can play with one's experience of time; was it an hour which seemed like a whole day, or a whole day which seemed like an hour.

So we find Apollinaire, here in contrast to the style of "Exercice", exploiting the rhyme and rhythm of his poem to create surprises for the reader; to offer him images which are then transformed into something else. (1)

The second verse shows us Apollinaire playing on the similarity of sound in two words in order to create an impression of rapid change suggestive of, perhaps, the fickleness of feminine nature, so leading us to think that the "tu" is addressed to the woman, and then transferring this to his own memory -

"Tu te déguise

A ta guise

Mémoire espionne du coeur

Tu ne retrouves plus l'exquise

Ruse et le coeur seul est vainqueur"

But this sets up certain contradictions in the phrasing, for if it is memory that is being addressed, and it is memory that is the heart's spy, then it appears that the spy is trying to deceive the master. One notes also the separation of "l'exquise" from "ruse" which suggests that memory alone cannot serve to make the poet happy.

(1) This, of course, returns us to the "Chanson" and its exploitation of identical means.

The final verse carries the metaphor of spying one stage further, and the poet asks if "Tu" -whoever that may be - can see memory, blinded and ready to die. -

Mais la vois-tu cette mémoire
 Les yeux bandés prête à mourir
 Elle affirme qu'on peut l'en croire
 Mon coeur vaincra sans coup férir"

Instead of being executed, however, the spy confirms the information given about the fortress and so the poet is able to conclude that he will win "Sans coup férir". But who is the "tu" in the first line? The same person as in the preceding verse? If that is so, then this would appear to be the woman in question, in which case the poet is saying that his memory presented him with a true picture.

However, it is not the interpretation of the poem which interests us most; rather it is the way in which the poet is combining the styles which have been the principal currents of his poetry to date. This is, of course, not the first occasion on which he has done so, but we choose to draw attention to this because it is an important trait in his last poem, and also because most of the poetry which we have discussed so far in "Calligrammes" has not been of this kind. This poem was written in late 1915 and it is interesting to note that we find Apollinaire moving away already from the extremely free forms which he exploited in poems such as "Arbre". True this is only a minor poem, but there is also the sequence "Le Médaillon toujours fermé" which we have already examined and which is also in this style.

The other poems which we intend to analyse in this section

are all of the other kind, much freer in their form, that is to say, and all in same way concerned with the ideas of simultaneism which formed part of Apollinaire's poetry, as we have seen, from before his meeting with Delaunay. "IL Y A " is, of course an excellent example of this. The poem consists of a series of images introduced by the words " Il y a", and which have nothing in common except their presence in the mind of the poet -

Il y a un vaisseau qui a emporté ma bien aimée

Il y a dans le ciel six saucisses et la nuit on dirait
des asticots dont naîtraient les étoiles

Il y a un sous-marin ennemi qui en voulait à mon amour

Il y a mille petits sapins brisés par les éclats d'obus
autour de moi

Il y a un fantassin qui passe aveuglé par les gaz asphyxiants" (1)

The poem is an exteriorisation of the human consciousness, in this case the poet's own, which mixes memories, with wishes, with what is seen at that moment, with what the imagination throws up into the conscious mind as well. Thus the ship carrying away the "bien aimée" is imagined or remembered, but in either case is attached to a reality, and the submarine is the expression of a fear, the "six saucisses" in the sky a fantasy of the imagination, possibly based on the sight of airships or barrage balloons, the broken firs probably an element of external reality, and yet all these things are presented to us by the same words "Il y a ", -there is. The poem recognises no barriers between levels of reality, no distinction in time, no hurdle presented by distance. All that the

(1) O.P. p. 280

poet names is present here and now, in the poem. Thus the world is broken down and remoulded in the poet's own image. Simultanism is a re-ordering of experience, the creation of a new world through art.

This is equally true of the poem entitled "Simultanéités", although the poet does not here have recourse to the same procedure of near hypnotic repetition of the key words "Il y a " as in the poem of that title. Instead it is the title which gives us the link between the series of images which are presented in verses of four lines this time -

"Les canons tonnent dans la nuit

On dirait des vagues tempêtes

Des coeurs où pointe un grand ennui

Ennui qui toujours se répète

Il regarde venir là-bas

Les prisonniers L'heure est si douce

Dans ce grand bruit ouaté très bas

Très bas qui grandit sans secousse" (1)

the poem also has much greater degree of narrative continuity than the preceding one; its first four verses all seem to follow one from the other. Yet, when we consider the two verses above we see that there is nothing to link the "Il" of the second stanza with the ⁿcanons of the first. True, the context makes it clear that the "Il" referred to is a soldier, but there is nothing to prove that verses one and two are set in the same time (the firing of ⁿcanons is no indication).

The first verse really offers three simultaneous images - the cannons firing, the beating of waves on a beach, the storm in a heart prey to a "grand ennui"; the clearly discernible thread running from one to the other is the regular sound, but the real link must be the poet's mind which draws together the sea 'separating him from Madeleine to whom the poem was sent and his "ennui" caused by the separation with the sound of the cannons which is actually part of his present and real situation as opposed to his state of mind.

This is also ^{true} of all Apollinaire's simultaneities - we think of Louis II of Bavaria sitting at his wonderful instrument listening to all the sounds of the world (1) and realise that this is precisely what Apollinaire is doing in "Il Y A " and in this poem, acting himself the role of the king, drawing to him as the centre the seemingly unrelated aspects of the external world. And here, in order to make it less obvious that these "simultaneités" find their link in him, Apollinaire speaks of himself in the third person and otherwise attempts to make his presence as unobtrusive as possible, so as to increase the surprise value of the juxtaposition of the different images.

The third and fourth verses of the poem are much the same as the first two and comment upon them would only be to repeat most of what has already been said about both this poem and "Il Y A ", so we pass on to the fifth verse of the poem which offers us a disturbing image that we may connect with whichever aspect of the poem we wish, since the poet refrains from attaching it himself to any particular part.

(1) Cf. "Le Roi Lune" in "Le Poète Assassiné."

"Belles noix du vivant noyer
 La grande folie en vain vous gaule
 Brunette écoute gazouiller
 La mésange sur ton épaule"

Are the "belles noix du vivant noyer" the images of the poem, and hence the tree the poet? Certainly this interpretation suggests itself very strongly - or, of course, the tree may be life itself, rather than the poet. If we accept this interpretation, then the poet is saying that these images are the fruit of experience which "la grande folie" - surely the war, the sight of human beings pouring all their energies into destroying each other - cannot destroy, and so they represent the personal and human element of his life which resists the bestial and mechanical forces of the war in which he is involved. The next two lines of the stanza offer an image of tenderness which one can well imagine a soldier cherishing as a link with happier times in the midst of war.

The last two stanzas seem to be a commentary on the rest of the poem and on the attitude which the poem implies -

"Notre amour est une lueur
 Qu'un projecteur du coeur dirige
 Vers l'ardeur égale du coeur
 Qui sur le haut Phare s'érige
 O phare-fleur mes souvenirs
 Les cheveux noirs de Madeleine
 Les atroces lueurs des tirs
 Ajoutent leur clarté soudaine
 A tes beaux yeux ô Madeleine"

The striking image which opens the first of these two verses switches from a shaft of light cutting through the darkness of a cinema to the beam of a lighthouse cutting through the night. Both beams of light share a property which reveals much about the construction of the poem and about the way in which the poet's mind functions - that property being the ability to isolate and to hold for a moment a particular scene or object so that it is presented to the consciousness in dramatic fashion. Thus the poet's mind has isolated the images of the poem and as the beam of the lighthouse sweeps on joining one thing to another, or as the light beam of the cinema projector is made to carry the changing images of a film, so the poet has juxtaposed his images in the poem linking them one to another by their physical proximity, and implying at the source of these images his own mind as the beam of the lighthouse indicates also the position of the lighthouse itself or the projector's shaft the presence of the film.

The opening line of the second stanza provides a clue to the substance of the images which the poet has woven into his poem - his memories are compared to a lighthouse/flower and this image clearly combines the phallic aspect of each of the objects named as well as recalling the persistent phallic associations of cannons, but this does not at all exclude the other qualities which the two objects share, i.e. a quality of suddenness, of blossoming as the flower opens, or the beam of the lighthouse suddenly sweeps into view. And so the final lines of the poem bring together the two things which have really been the sole

subject of the poem, each manifesting itself in different and contrasting aspects of its nature, so that here at the end of the poem the simultaneous images are added together and the beauty of the woman's eyes has the beauty of the explosions of shells and flares added to it.

Surely it is not necessary to say again that this addition can only take place when the poet is there to be the medium in which it takes place, and that consequently simultaneity is a reinterpretation and re-ordering of one's experience of the world which is really an act affirming, momentarily, one's own existence.

The final poem in this section is "Du Cotton dans les Oreilles" (1) an experimental poem of an extremely exuberant kind and one which announces its intentions to us immediately as the word "VIF" in heavy black capitals detaches itself from the first page of the poem which is entirely taken up by a calligramme - this being another piece which combines this form with regular verse and with vers libre. The first page also contains what appears to be the rationale of the poem, and indeed of much of the poetry which we have analysed in this study -

"Les points d'impacts dans mon âme toujours en guerre"
 -(this is written vertically reading from the bottom one word above the other) - and this seems to us to be a clear justification of our statement that Apollinaire found the conflict of the war a parallel to the conflict of his own soul and of the artistic

(1) O.P. p. 287

milieu in which he lived. The rest of the poem clearly stems from this line as we find Apollinaire playing with rhymes and images in the fashion of a nonsense poem, occasionally piercing the playful surface of the poem with a painful reminder of the situation that was his and his comrades' -

"Ceux qui revenaient de la mort
En attendaient une pareille
Et tout ce qui venait du nord
Allait obscurcir le soleil"

When it follows verses such as the above the nonsense rhymes game of the poem takes on a peculiarly desperate character and becomes a symbol of the absurdity of life for those faced with the absurdity of death -

"Qu'est-ce qu'il se met dans le coco
Bon sang de bois il s'est saoulé
Et sans pinard et sans tacot
Avec de l'eau
Allô la truie"

No amount of playful; nonsensical rhyming can, however, quite dispel the presence of death, just as plugging one's ears with cotton might muffle to a large extent the noise of the artillery but does not totally deaden it, leaving instead a sound which gives rise to the following image -

"Le silence des phonographes
Mitrailleuses des cinémas"

-which in equating the hiss and crackle of a gramophone record

heard before or after the music with the distant or muffled sound of machine-guns shows us to what extent the experience of being under fire could become an obsessive memory.

The next few lines offer us the familiar comparison between the blossoming of a flower and an exploding shell but also finds a new and very disturbing image for the same phenomenon -

"Fleurs de feu des lueurs-frimas

. . .

Et les trajectoires cabrées

Trébuchements de soleil-nains

Sur tant de chansons déchirées"

This then, is the pattern of the poem - a frenzied movement from serious to silly, from powerful image to simple play on words or childish rhyme; and the effect of this is to make us experience to the full the turbulence of the poet's "âme toujours en guerre", not only in the sense that this is a reaction to war, but also in the sense that it represents the many conflicting aspects of Apollinaire's nature.

Before leaving this poem it is interesting to look at the following image in which we find Apollinaire modifying his image of the blossoming flower in order to express the suddenness with which the silence comes when the artillery barrage ceases-

"Puis ce fut cette fleur sans nom

A peine un souffle un souvenir

Quand s'en allèrent les canons"

- the mystery of the nameless flower combines with the distance from experience that is given by memory to create the sensation

of silence, while the tense of verb and the suddenness that is associated with the appearance of a memory before the conscious mind provide the necessary sensation of abrupt change.

If, as some such as Aragon and Breton have suggested, the war was nothing more than a game for Apollinaire, a game which fed his imagery; then why is it that all the poetry of the war period is war poetry? Poetry, that is to say, which not only draws upon the war for its images but returns us to the man at war. The variety of styles of writing which Apollinaire produced during this period all head finally in the same direction - that of a man trying to make sense of the world which he knew - Madeleine, Lou, Marie, Paris and the artistic avant-garde - and the world which he knows : the war. Is this not an honest intention?

CHAPTER THREE : SECTION TEN

LA TETE ETOILEE

In this section we shall examine the poems "Souvenirs", "La Victoire" and "La Jolie Rousse" from the section of "Calligrammes" entitled "La Tête Etoilée" as well as the poem "Les Collines" which we have already indicated to be contemporary with the poems of this section, and also the suite of poems intitled "Vitam Impendere Amori" which was published in 1917. As our analysis of the poems contained in "Calligrammes" has been developed on a chronological basis, we shall attempt to show here that these last poems indicate a quite definite evolution which separates them from the first poems of the volume, but also that that evolution is a very gradual one, and not quite so clear as S.I. Lockerbie indicates in his study of the poems of "Calligrammes" (1) to which we shall refer on several points.

It will be seen from the ensuing discussion that the poem "Souvenirs" does not really represent as different a style as Lockerbie claims, and also that the poems of this period bear a more significant relationship to poems such as "Toujours" which has already been analysed and which, we remind the readers of the present study, was composed in 1915. We begin, then, with the poem "Souvenirs".

The five verses which go to make up this short poem present us with a series of images of which the first four, each image

(1) R.L.M. -série Apollinaire nos 5 & 6 -Le rôle de l'imagination dans "Calligrammes"

being contained in one verse, are much more everyday and in some cases more purely visual than the fifth, although certain lines penetrate the everyday context with a more disquieting note, e.g.-

"Une toute petite vieille au nez pointu

J'admire la bouillotte d'émail bleu

Mais le rat pénètre dans le cadavre et y demeure"(1)

Clearly the first two lines can be situated in a context of everyday normality, while the third comes as an almost baroque reminder of the passage of time, thus modifying through the surprise of its presence our feelings about the first two lines. This same effect can be observed in the first verse, in which the impression is given that the poet is talking about lakes, the blackness of which lends a certain sinister note until the last line changes the meaning of the word "lacs"-

"Deux lacs nègres

Entre une forêt

Et une chemise qui sèche"

-into the spaces of the area lying between the shirt and the forest which can be seen through, in all probability, the gaps between the body of the shirt and the arms.

This first verse appears more as a comment on the nature of memory than as a remembered scene - literally interpreting the image we might say that the shirt, in the foreground represents the conscious mind and that the forest, in the background, the unconscious mind, with the connecting fragments, relating to both background and foreground but separated from each other

(1) O.P. p. 299

being the link memory provides with past and present experience , unconscious mind and consciousness. It will be noted that this interpretation depends strongly upon a definite visual interpretation of the image, and this seems to us a point of capital importance in this poem. Consider the second verse-

"Bouche ouverte sur un harmonium

C'était une voix faite d'yeux

Tandis qu'il traine de petites gens"

-the connection between the first and second lines is clearly the similarity of shape that exists between an open mouth and an eye, moreover the reader cannot escape the image of a harmonica which is brought to mind by the image of the open mouth and the similarity of the word "harmonium" which the poet undoubtedly intended. Here the visual link is supplemented by the poet's awareness that the reader will see the image of a harmonica before he corrects his initial impression, thus the line -

"C'était une voix faite d'yeux"

can be made to fit into the series of visual impressions, since this is a fair description of a harmonica. In each case the link is provided by a visual interpretation of the image.

This visual quality of that which provides a link between past and present is something very important in Apollinaire's imagery; consider, for example, the poem "Photographie" (1) in which the photograph is considered in just this role - i.e. a kind of fixed and permanent memory - and the poet draws the conclusion-

"Photographie tu es l'ombre

Du soleil

Qu'est sa beauté"

(1) O.P. p. 257. Cf. also section eight of this chapter

Thus returning to the first verse of the poem "Souvenirs" we can see that the image offered to us here is both a memory and an image of the human mind indicating the role of memory. Following this apprehension of the significance of the image we might offer the interpretation that in the second verse the presence of the "petites gens" is to be seen as the evocation of the inhabitants, as it were, of one's memory which, itself is compared to the mouth/voix/eyes/harmonium image of the first two lines - an image which may be taken to represent the visual and aural dimension of memory which record the existence of these "petites gens" and which may call them into being again. While on a first and cursory reading of the poem it may not be quite clear that each verse represents a unit, other than a purely conventional one, it should be obvious from the above that whatever lack of relationship there may appear to be between any of the elements of each verse, there is nonetheless an ^oimportant and overriding unity.

Applying this conclusion to the third verse, which appears more than the others to be made up of disparate fragments, we may associate the first two lines in various ways - the old lady is the owner of the footwarmer and the scene is remembered by Apollinaire because he admired the blue enamel of the footwarmer; or the footwarmer which Apollinaire remembers was decorated with a picture of an old lady etc. - but however one interprets these two details, the visual impact of them is such that the third line is not only an intimation of the mortality of the old lady, hence human beings in general, but the brittle enamel is also

prey to the gnawings of the rat, and thus memory is seen to be like human beings themselves, subject to alteration and eventual destruction by time. Of course the third line is probably something which is remembered in its own right from the poet's experience of the trenches, but this does not in any way preclude the kind of relationship to the other two lines which we have indicated. (That is: the "Nez pintu" could refer not only to the old lady but also to the shape of the "bouillotte" as well as to the rat; therefore all three are to some extent identified. Also, as the "bouillotte" is described as being made of blue enamel, this may link it to the corpse, which may be that of a blue-uniformed French soldier.)

The first three lines of the fourth verse present a clear and simple picture which could as easily be something observed by the poet at the moment of writing his poem as a memory, and the fourth line is a comment upon this scene which may reflect either upon the poet's view of opera or simply be a joke about the range through which the incorrectly remembered tune passes - and here again we have a comment upon the infidelity of memory -

"Un monsieur en bras de chemise

Se rase près de la fenêtre

En chantant un petit air qu'il ne sait pas très bien

Ça fait tout un opéra"

Thus the images of the poem appear not just as lists of remembered scenes or objects written down for their own sake, under a title which is simple announcement of their nature, they are also ima-

-ges which reveal in themselves something about the nature of memory and its relationship to the personality.

After this list, then, of memories comes the mysterious image and question -

"Toi qui te tournes vers le roi

Est-ce que Dieu voudrait mourir encore "

Unless we have seen that the preceding images are a comment upon human nature, because upon memory, then how can we understand these last two lines? And yet even if we have understood this, the surprise of the final image of the poem still has considerable impact upon us. As we have indicated, behind all the images there is the simplification of the presence of the poet (just as there is behind the simultaneities of other poems, but we shall develop this point further in a moment) and therefore the penultimate line of the poem may appear to us as the poet addressing himself as one turning towards the king -clearly from the context of the poem a symbol of memory, or perhaps the "toi" refers to memory turning towards the past, which is king because of the dominion it has over memory. The meanings of the last two lines are, then, many -God may be God, i.e. Christ dying again through the memory of the crucifixion, which leads to the conclusion that one is a prisoner of one's remembered experience; or the God dying again and again is man whose divinity is subject to the limitations of his ability to interpret his own experience, limits imposed in part by the infidelity of memory, and hence the death, or rather the desire to die, is shown by the turning of memory to seek an answer which will be inconclusive and therefore deadly.

The important point about these last lines is that they carry the poem well beyond the simply implied presence of the poet's self behind the memories, just as the poet's self is behind the simultaneities (1), and make of this presentation of apparently external images a profound and ~~an~~ introverted piece of writing. This opinion is in contrast to the ideas advanced by S.I. Lockerbie about this poem and others of the period preceding the composition of the other poems to be discussed in this section, and therefore we shall now develop this idea a little further, comparing it with Lockerbie's analysis.

"Des bribes de conversation apparemment autonomes qui figurent dans "Les Fenêtres" à l'image bien connue d'"A travers l'Europe" :

"Où je m'en allais à la campagne avec une charmante cheminée
tenant sa chienne en laisse"
ou aux images-strophes de "Souvenirs", il n'y avait qu'un pas à faire. Ni les bribes de conversation, ni ces images ne cherchent à ouvrir une perspective sur la vie intérieure du poète qui les a conçues : elles frappent au contraire par leur air d'indépendance énigmatique". (2)

We would not at all dispute the statement that these images of this poem possess a very striking "indépendance énigmatique" but it seems fairly clear to us that they achieve this through that very same independence. This poem was sent to Madeleine on the 10th March 1916 under the title "Poèmes pour Peintures" (with one or two variations), and this title clearly indicates

(1) Cf. Section eight of this chapter

(2) "Le rôle de l'imagination dans "Calligrammes" 2.R.Œ.L.M.

the intention of the poet to endow the images with a degree of autonomy, as well as the strong visual quality which we have noted; but when the title of the poem becomes "Souvenirs" then the way in which we approach the poem alters, and we cannot escape the presence of the poet behind the memories, so that we are in some way prepared for the twist of the last two lines.

If we consider the poem "Toujours" which we have already analysed in a previous section of this chapter and which dates from May 1915, it seems to us that we have a point at which we can see the transition from the external kind of poetry, such as "Les Fenêtres", to the more personal and introspective kind, which is that of "Alcools" as well as the remaining poems of "Calligrammes". In the last lines of this poem, the plea which Apollinaire is making may very well be seen as a kind of apology for the experimental and radically different kind of poetry which he began to write around 1913-

"Où est le Christophe Colomb à qui l'on devra l'oubli d'un
continent

Perdre

Mais perdre vraiment

Pour laisser place à la trouvaille

Perdre

La vie pour trouver la Victoire" (1)

Certainly the willingness to subordinate oneself to the element of chance in Lockerbie has, rightly, discerned in much of the poetry of "Alcools", is nonetheless present in much that Apollinaire wrote during the war years. Let us glance again, briefly,

(1) O.P. p. 237

at the poem "Simultanéités", which we discussed in the preceding section. It seems fair to say that the stanzas of this poem, the first one at least, enjoy the same degree of mysterious autonomy as the stanzas of "Souvenirs", yet here also, the end of the poem becomes much more personal and introverted than one would have expected from the beginning.

The penultimate stanza beginning with the lines -

"Notre amour est une lueur

Qu'un projecteur du cœur dirige" (1)

-comes as ^aclear announcement of a particular kind of involvement of the poet in the images of the other verses. Thus we find Apollinaire combining the "poème-crée" as Lockerie has called it, with the more personal lyricism which marks these later poems. Clearly, the fact that the poet is prepared to lead the reader through the series of apparently unconnected images is an indication of the way in which he was exploiting the techniques of violence at this particular period. But this has already been dealt with in our analysis of simultanism. The important point which we wish to underline here, is that the poet has turned away from the extreme development of these techniques as we saw them in poems such as "Arbre". The ground is, then, well prepared for the integration of these techniques into the more introspective ~~we~~, and almost reflective, poetry of the last years of Apollinaire's life, and it is this which concerns us in this section.

(1) O.P. p. 286

We pass on now to "La Victoire", the poem which, for André Breton, was Apollinaire's "testament spirituel", and which we shall show to be as fertile in ideas as this statement would lead us to expect. We shall also examine the relationship between the form and content of this poem, looking to see to what extent Apollinaire himself lives up to the advice which he is giving here.

The first two lines of the poem set the scene for us -

"Un coq chante je rêve et les feuillards agitent

Leurs feuilles qui ressemblent à de pauvres marins" (1)

- but a scene which partakes of the unreality of dream, not only because the poet says that he is dreaming, but also because of the comparison of the leaves to the sailors, which is far from being an obvious one. This comparison, then, appears to the reader as a projection of the poet's will onto the scene rather than a ~~smile~~^{image} or metaphor which tells him something about the terms involved; it is a surprise image which is intended to communicate an immediate feeling of "dépaysement" to us .

The next three lines seem to carry on from the reference to sailors, so that now the element of similarity which the poet saw in the leaves and the sailors is revealed on a more readily understandable plane -

"Ailés et tournoyants comme Icare le faux

Des aveugles gesticulants comme des fourmis

Se miraient sous la pluie aux reflets du trottoir"

(1) O.P. p. 309

The fluttering of the leaves brings to the poet's mind the image of Icarus fluttering his wings in vain, and from this image he goes on to that of who are about to be drowned, or shipwrecked (this is surely the hint which the adjective "pauvre" offers us) just as Icarus is a kind of sailor of the air who comes to grief, hence the description of him as "Le faux" since he could not do all that he seemed to be able to.

The two lines which follow the appearance of Icarus change the imagery in a very unexpected way, and yet they contain a link with the image of Icarus, which is also a hint of a theme to be introduced later in the poem, for had Icarus been blind, he would not have been tempted to fly too near the sun and so cause his own death. Typically, however, Apollinaire juxtaposes the two images and goes no further in suggesting a connection between them, yet there is a kind of parallel between the description of Icarus as winged and turning or spinning (like the leaves) and the description of the blind men as gesticulating like ants. The irony of the third line which sees the blind men contemplating their reflections in the puddles on the pavements, also offers an implicit comparison with Icarus blinding himself by looking into the sun.

Thus the poem begins in an atmosphere of "surreality", in a world where leaves resemble sailors and where blind men can see, yet still the next line comes as a surprise to us -

"Leurs rires amassés en grappes de raisin"

-here is another of the poet's images which seem to function at the wave of a magic wand : the laughter of the blind men

becomes bunches of grapes. (Perhaps the image is suggestive of the roundness of the sound of laughter -perhaps the grapes are to be seen as reductions of the sun, which they, the blind men, can eat, yet which destroyed Icarus, hence their laughter, which is probably mocking.) Whatever the image evokes for us, its initial effect is to take us by surprise, and therefore to keep us from moulding the poem into what we think it is going to be. This indeed appears to be the main function of this entire opening section : to be indicators of an alternative universe, as it were.

The next lines re-introduce the person of the poet who has slipped out of sight since his appearance in line one -

"Ne sors plus de chez moi diamant qui parlais
Dors doucement tu es chez toi tout t'appartient
Mon lit ma lampe et mon casque troué"

-and in these lines, the images which were attributed to the poet's dream in the first line of the poem are now ascribed to a "diamant qui parlais", which, apostrophised thus, we may take to be the poet's idea of his muse. But the image is not simply one of clarity and brilliance, a diamond has many facets, and we may legitimately say that the poet, in changing one thing into another, in switching his imagery from classical to modern, from the serious to the ridiculous, is showing us the different facets of the external world and of our own natures as well. The imagery of gems is continued into the next section of the poem -

"Regards précieux saphirs taillés aux environs de Saint-
Les jours étaient une pure émeraude" Claude

- but the comparisons are still unexpected and surprising, for if the adjective "précieux" applied to "regards" in some way prepares the comparison with a precious stone, then the precision of the attribute "taillés aux environs de Saint-Claude" gives the image a literal quality which is quite unexpected, as is the comparison of days to emeralds, when one surely thinks of sapphires as more appropriate to this context.

Apart from this aspect of the images in these lines, it is also more important to note how they contrast, in their stylised immobility, with the hectic and slightly ridiculous movement that takes place in the opening lines. It is also, at this point, clear how this change is brought about in the sudden metamorphosis of the isolated line -

"Leurs rires amassés en grappes de raisins"

-which immobilises, as it were, the movement of the people, the blind men, Icarus, the sailors, freezing their laughter in the static image of bunches of grapes.

As yet, no clear direction is emerging from the images of the poem. When we have read only this far, we are left with the impression of several rapid visual images which have been offered to us, but which have not been allowed to remain before our eyes. This impression remains with us as we read the next lines of the poem, although these to some degree synthesise the qualities of brilliance, of the precious stones, and movement, of the blind men and the others, in the image of meteors crossing the sky -

"Je me souviens de toi ville de météores

Ils fleurissaient en l'air pendant ces nuits où rien ne dort
Jardins de la lumière où j'ai cueilli des bouquets"

The importance of these lines is that they seem to draw the imagery of the poem to a unity, which in no way springs from a revelation of hidden meaning in the lines which we have read so far. Even the image of exploding shells, which is only hinted at by the mention of the poet's helmet with the hole caused by the fragment of an exploding shell, can be assimilated to the strange "ville des météores".

Perhaps the words "ces nuits où rien ne dort" offer us some clue as to the gist of the poem up to this point. Perhaps the poet is saying that nothing is sleeping in his imagery either, and that therefore what he is doing is trying to show as many aspects, however conflicting they may appear as possible. But aspects of what? The last of the three lines quoted above go a long way towards supplying the answer in their unmistakable echo of the lines from "Le Brasier" -

"Descendant des hauteurs où pense la lumière

Jardins rouant plus haut que tous les ciels immobiles⁽¹⁾

The bouquets which the poet has picked in the gardens of the light are the images of this poem, which have been taken by him from some realm of the mind to which he, by his constant struggle to open his poetry to the imagination, has gained access.

As the poet reveals, a few lines later, that he is writing about poetry, about the act of writing itself, the precise nature of his gardens of light becomes clear to the reader, and he sees them as the same realm as the poet speaks about in these lines from "La Jolie Rousse" -

"Nous voulons vous donner de vastes et d'étranges domaines

Où le mystère en fleurs s'offre à qui veut le cueillir"

(1) O.P. pl 110

- but for the poem up to this point, the suggestion is simply of some kind of miraculous domain to which the poet has access, but which remains mysterious.

The next lines return from the heights of these mysterious gardens of light to the ridiculous, yet true to the style of Apollinaire they have a perfectly serious function, not the least part of which must be to laugh at himself so as to remind us that he is not a god -

"Tu dois en avoir assez de faire peur à ce ciel

Qu'il garde son hoquet "

The first of these two lines sounds almost as if Apollinaire makes the sky afraid because of this divine power which he has acquired, the old gods tremble before the approach of the new, but the second line rapidly dispels this, showing us the image of the poet trying to frighten the sky into losing its hiccoughs. The poet's claim to divine power, which bordered on the ridiculous, are dissolved in our laughter, but it is the poet himself who has made us laugh.

The next lines begin to crystalise the theme of the poem, as the poet cries out against the complacency of the successful, who are probably those who have evolved a style that has pleased the public and are now content to go on producing from the same mould, incapable of seeing that they are ossifying as they work -

"On imagine difficilement

A quel point le succès rend les gens stupides et tranquilles"

The contrast with the constant experiments of Apollinaire's own work could not be greater, and it is, of course, through this path

that Apollinaire has reached his gardens of light.

The apparent lack of coherence in the poem now begins to give way to a discernible pattern as the lines

"A l'Institut des jeunes aveugles on a demandé

N'avez-vous point de jeune aveugle ailé

-bring out the full implications of the juxtaposition of the image of Icarus with that of the blind man, and also hint that the gardens of light are open to those who are blind, even if their blindness is of their own choosing and is selective as is implied in the question which Apollinaire poses in "Toujours" -

"Où est le Christophe Colomb à qui l'on devra l'oubli d'un continent"

But although the pattern which is emerging points to the poem being a discussion of the way in which Apollinaire wrote and wanted to write poetry, it is also perfectly open to us to infer, and probably this was Apollinaire's intention, that a larger context, that of an imaginative and freer approach to the interpretation of our everyday experience is the subject of the poem and the victory of the title. This view is substantiated by the allocation to the "diamant" of the poet's bed, light and soldier's helmet - things which belongs to his life ^h whether on the everyday level or on the exceptional level.

This kind of interpretation would, however, not be acceptable to those who hold that Apollinaire was a simple "fantaisiste" rather than a really powerful advocate of the imagination. On this point, we agree with the opinion ^{put} forwarded by Lockerbie in the second part of his analysis of "Calligrammes" (1)-

(1) Le rôle etc." 2 pp. 87-88 R.L.M. (Series on Apollinaire) 6.

"Pour ces commentateurs, l'activité imaginative d'Apollinaire est tournée vers l'extérieur au point où elle perd en profondeur ce qu'elle gagne en variété et en ampleur. Ils préfèrent donc dire avec Mme. Marie-Jeanne Durré que moins que la vraie imagination, c'est une certaine forme de fantaisie qui se dégage de son oeuvre: 'Je crois bien que pour lui' dit Madame Durré, 'surnaturalisme' et 'surréalisme' n'étaient guère autre chose que le jeu de sa fantaisie"*

"Certes, si par fantaisie il faut entendre cette invention de libre allure dont nous venons de parler, c'est l'évidence des écrits théoriques qu'Apollinaire n'aurait pas complètement récusé le terme et on pourrait sans inconvénient l'adopter pour bien des pièces de "Calligrammes". (....) dans plusieurs de ses dernières oeuvres (il y a) une certaine opération lyrique par laquelle l'imagination en vient à jouer un rôle allant bien au-delà de la fantaisie" (1)

One simply cannot deny the serious aspect of most of the poems in which we have traced this appeal to the freedom of the imagination, and it will be clearly seen that this theme is central to the poems "Les Collines" and "La Jolie Rousse" also, and although it may be argued that Apollinaire never went as far as either Jarry or the surrealists in applying his beliefs to his way of life, one cannot simply go on from that to say that the imagination for him only came into play when he was writing. Less demonstrative he may have been, possibly because he was afraid of the consequences of exhibitionism as some have suggested (2), but the understanding

(1) The differences in Lockerbie's and our points of view have already been partly discussed and will be further discussed in this section.

+ [Durré 2 p. 235] L.'s note.

(2) Cf. for example P. Soupault's analysis of Apollinaire's attitude in his book - "Guillaume Apollinaire ou les reflets de l'incendie".

of the nature of human existence and experience that is evidenced by his poetry, especially the poems of this section, cannot fail to indicate the primacy of the imagination for him.

Thus the image of Icarus, one who lost his life in seeking to approach the sun, must be given its full value in the context of this poem; and if the lines concerning the quest for "un jeune aveugle ailé" are followed by these -

"O bouches l'homme est à la recherche d'un nouveau langage

Auquel le grammairien d'aucune langue n'aura rien à dire"

-which stress the importance of language and hence of poetry, this is surely an indication of the importance which Apollinaire placed upon the expression of one's experience. It is useful here to recall the statement which he made in a letter to Henri Martineau, concerning "Alcools" -

"Je ne crois point avoir imité, car chacun de mes poèmes est la commémoration d'un événement de ma vie.... " (1)

-and no-one can surely dispute, especially after the work of MM. Adéma and Décaudin, as well as Mme Durry, the enormous importance of the life of Apollinaire in the evolution of his poetry. His poetry is not only his experience transformed by his imagination, it is also a part of his life in its own right, or why else should Apollinaire have devoted his life to the kind of existence which was seldom more than above subsistence level? If further indication of the involvement of life and the imagination is needed then we have only to look again at the conclusion to the poem "Toujours" -

(1) O.C. t. 4 p. 768

"Perdre

La vie pour trouver la Victoire"

-to which one can only add that other than the date of composition, there is nothing to tie this poem to the experience of war, and therefore that the last lines must really refer to some other commitment of life to a cause.

The poem "La Victoire", that is, continues to be presented to us as a series of disjointed images and references, which apart from being a now familiar use of the techniques of violence, is also to some degree a justification for the poet's calling for the use of various noises which are not generally considered to be part of the language in poetry; for if he could, and did, disregard completely certain conventions about the nature of poetry, then it is quite possible that one will be just as successful in ignoring other conventions, such as that which holds that poems are made of words rather than "Les divers pets labiaux" etc. It is easy to reply that Apollinaire never went to these lengths himself, it is also easy to answer this criticism by saying that he was seeking to provoke. Yet it would be wrong to dismiss the central section of this poem as a simple attempt to provoke or to surprise, for the language that man is seeking is surely the language of the imagination, and who can say out of hand that we shall not find it in the most banal sounds. The principal thing is that we should look where we have never deigned to up to now.

Just how much our reactions are conditioned by habit is brought out in the lines -

"Mais elles sont comme des malades sans volonté
Ma foi les gens s'habitueraient vite au mutisme
La mimique suffit bien au cinéma"

- but of course poetry is composed of words (even if it is the poet's desire to transform these beyond recognition) and therefore mimicry of strange animal sounds will have to take place of the mime of the cinema, and this the poet sees as a way of talking. -

"Mais entêtons-nous à parler

Remuons la langue

Lançons des postillons

On veut de nouveaux sons de nouveaux sons de nouveaux sons"

This passage builds up to a climax which suddenly breaks out into the image of a train, which is not only the progression of time and of the development of the scientific age, but also an artifact in its own right, and therefore something which will one day be not one of the new wonders of science, but rather a museum piece to be admired for its beauty at the same time as its ridiculous inefficiency is apparent to those who live in the age of superior forms^{of} locomotion. Thus the very thirst for the new which the poet is proclaiming not only cannot be slaked, but also has a desperate feeling of necessity about it, since we cannot but accept the march of time -

"Habituez-vous à roter à volonté

Et quelle lettre grave comme un son de cloche

A travers nos mémoires

Nous n'aimons pas assez la joie

De voir les belles choses neuves

O mon amie hâte-toi

Crains qu'un jour un train ne t'émeuve

Plus

Regarde-le plus vite pour toi

Ces chemins de fer qui circulent

Sortiront bientôt de la vie

Ils seront beaux et ridicules"

We notice with what ease the poet uses the line break to say several different things with the words "O mon amie hâte-toi/Craains qu'un jour un train ne t'émeuve/ Plus"; first he seems to be saying that we should be afraid of the day when we find a train a moving sight for this will imply the loss of the standards of beauty of a previous age, but as his injunction is to hasten, he seems to be advocating this headlong rush into the future, always towards the new; then the single, isolated word "Plus" completely transforms this into an awareness of all that we ^{lose}lose with the passage of time. The train ends as a museum piece, and it is here that we must be aware of the full significance of its symbolic value, for if the train is progress itself, then clearly Apollinaire is saying that we shall go on and on changing the world round us, building new and more wonderful machines, and this is a process which we cannot, must not resist, yet nor can we expect to find any kind of fulfilment in this, for it simply means that what is new today is old tomorrow and we are still attached to it. What then are we to do? We must go on living in our age, accepting trains, aeroplanes and whatever else science creates for us, but above all else we must continue to try to express ourselves in the language of that age, even if we have to create that language ourselves. Thus the next lines return to the theme of the search for new sounds -

"Parlez avec les mains faites claquer vos doigts

Tapez-vous sur la joue comme sur un tambour

O paroles "

Surely we cannot fail to see here the return to the theme which is also prominent in the poems of 1908, namely the overwhelming need to express oneself in poetry that is appropriate to the age. Not only is there the striking image of the gardens of light, which as we have pointed out belongs to "Le Brasier", there is also the constant and determined cry that we must accept the new, which is paralleled by the determination to find a new language that is free from restraint.

Typically, having brought us to this high point of tension in our need to accept the new and our desire not to lose the old, Apollinaire switches quite suddenly to something quite different -

"Deux lampes brûlent devant moi
Comme deux femmes qui rient
Je courbe tristement la tête
Devant l'ardente moquerie"

According to Margaret Davies this passage is Apollinaire's realisation that -

"If he advocates the noise of spitting and hawking as a new consonant he must merit "l'ardente moquerie" of the public" (1)
- but this seems very unsatisfactory to us. Why should Apollinaire transform his two lamps into two women, if all he wanted to indicate was that the public was antagonistic to his experiments? Surely the importance of the women, that Apollinaire loved, is so great in his poetry that we must see here an awareness of the difficulty of writing a love poem that consists of the sounds which he has been advocating! But more important than that is the feat that this

(1) M. Davies "Apollinaire" p.297

passage comes after the lines about the train and not those about the sounds of the new language. Thus just as the train rushes into the past and becomes eventually "beau(x) et ridicule(s)" so Apollinaire has become part of the past of these two women. Also, it seems to us that the lines

"Ce rire se répand

Partout

Parlez avec les mains "

-are not really as pessimistic as Mme. Davies' interpretation would make them. The "rire" certainly begins as the "ardente moquerie" of the preceding line, but it ends as the poet's own laugh in the face of the problem of time, its rhythm becoming the snapping of his fingers, the tapping of his hand upon his cheek that are part of the new language - "O paroles" - the cry at one and the same time indicates the insufficiency of words and the fact that the poet is creating new ones.

The lines which follow bind all these strands together in an image which certainly has nothing to do with the public mockery that Mme. Davies speaks of -

"Elles suivent dans la myrtaie

L'Eros et l'Antéros en larmes

Je suis ^{dans} le ciel de la cité"

The "elles" of the first line refers not only to the women but also to the words, for just as the two women represent the ephemeral nature of sensual love (Eros and the opposite which has surely nothing to do with hate) because they are women whom Apollinaire has loved. Yet the women follow among the myrtle bushes - the plant

sacred to Venus the goddess of love, and so they retain something of the love which they represent, ^{and} ~~the~~ the words ^{thus} serve for a moment to unite man to his experience and then become inadequate, become memories, retaining only part of what they were. Then comes the statement - I am the sky of the city; Apollinaire, then, fully aware of the transient nature of his role becomes the ubiquitous consciousness of modern man - an event which he hailed in "Merveille de la Guerre" (1)

Barely have we time to grasp these words, however, than the poet switches from city and sky to the sea, the sea which brought forth life on earth and which now is the destroyer of the sailors - the "pauvres marins" of the second line of the poem. The poet desires that his voice become like the voice of the sea-

"Ecoutez la mer

La mer gémit au loin et crier toute seule

Ma voix fidèle comme l'ombre

+ + +

Veut être à mer vivante infidèle comme toi"

The poet's voice which is the faithful shadow of life (because he has looked for and found a language that will hold the truth of his experience), yet it cannot be the faithful shadow of all life although this is what the poet desires, because this would be to swallow life up and to be, ultimately, unfaithful as is the sea itself. Thus the poet's wishes are in vain and his god-like status is just another of the victims of the sea, which here has surely the value of a symbol of death, such as it has had through centuries

(1) O.P. p.271 & also section nine of this chapter

of European literature.

"La mer qui a trahi des matelots sans nombre
Engloutit mes grands cris comme des dieux noyés
Et la mer au soleil ne supporte que l'ombre
Que jette des oiseaux les ailes éployées"

The sea supports the shadow of the sea-birds, something far finer than the substance itself; yet this image does more than show us there are essences by far too fine to be caught in the net of the human voice even when woven into a poem, it returns us to the image of Icarus plunging to his death in the sea. Icarus who lost his life because there are areas of experience which are forever closed to human beings.

Nonetheless, Man is not powerless in the face of the universe; language is his means towards the holding of experience so that he may relive it; but this power resides only in a living language, that is, which retains its power to surprise, to violate -

"La parole est soudaine et c'est un Dieu qui tremble"

Clearly this is the quality, beyond all others, with which Apollinaire has sought to endow his poetry. Once again we find the similarities with the great poems of 1908 inescapable, but in this instance it is significant that the poet feels himself to be the master of the powers that he seeks, while being aware of his limitations, so that here there is no returning of the theme of powers obtained at the cost of self-immolation.

The following lines recall strongly the second section of "Le Brasier" and the lines from "Les Fiançailles" -

"Jadis les morts sont revenus pour m'adorer

J'espérais la fin du monde

Mais la mienne arrive en sifflant comme un ouragan"

- but lack the idea of self-destruction that is so marked in the latter-

"Avance et soutiens-moi je regrette les mains

De ceux qui les tendaient et m'adoraient ensemble

Quelle oasis de bras m'accueillera demain

Connais-tu cette joie de voir des ~~nouvelles~~ choses neuves"

Thus the poet, in accepting the degree of destruction that is present in the passage of time, is still able to appreciate the joy of the new things which it brings also. In other words he has accepted the nature of life, not intellectually, but emotionally, instinctively, in a way that allows him to feel the paradox as strongly as he has expressed it in this poem. And thus he is able to say that he speaks the language of the sea, even though he knows that he cannot, like the sea be eternal and impassive, because he has attained a degree of acceptance which is sufficient to give him this power without being detached from life -

"O voir je parle le langage de la mer

Et dans le port la nuit des dernières tavernes

Moi qui suis plus têtue que non l'hydre de Lerne"

How can the second of these lines not recall the ship, and the "cafés" gonflés de fumées" of the "Chanson du Mal-Aimé" -the ship has reached the port. To the question which the earlier poem asks-

"Mon beau navire & ma memoire
 Avons-nous assez navigué
 Dans une onde mauvaise à boire
 Avons-nous assez divagué
 De la belle aube au triste soir"

-the reply is given here that the last night of the taverns is here, the port is won. (Clearly Lockerbie's tracing of the return of the motif of the Journey is in harmony with our view of the meaning of this passage, but we shall analyse this further with regard to more specific instances in "Les Collines") (1).

And if the port has finally been won, then Apollinaire allows no false modesty to prevent him from saying how he was able to win it- he persisted, (his pun is beyond translation - "headstrong" being as close as one may come), as stubbornly as only something super-human could; which is to say that he was quite the opposite of those people whom success had rendered "stupides et tranquilles".

The poem now draws to its end in a vision of the universe in flux, a vision which the poet has fully accepted, and of which he makes his poetry the illustration, finding in the metamorphosis of his hands into fish a surprise image to bring this home to the reader -

"La rue où nagent mes deux mains
 Aux doigts subtils fouillant la ville
 S'en va mais qui sait si demain
 La rue devenait immobile
 Qui sait où serait mon chemin"

(1) Cf. Lockerbie ~~op. cit.~~ 2 "Le rôle etc." 2.

The end of the poem reminds us, in its return to the image of the railways, of the inevitability of the passage of time -

"Songe que les chemins de fer

Seront démodés et abandonnés dans peu de temps

Regarde"

-(how much more the French lends itself to the intended contrast than the English, for what could sound more permanent than the ways of iron?) ; and also enunciates quite clearly the theme of the poem, that the true victory is to find a language which fully expresses the nature of things as the first names truly belonged to the things they designated -

"La Victoire avant tout sera

De bien voir au loin

De tout voir

De près

Et que tout ait un nom nouveau"

We now come to the poems of the sequence entitled "Vitam Impendere Amori", which, as both Margaret Davies and S.I. Lock-
bie have shown, are closely related to "La Jolie Rousse" (1). In this very delicate and allusive sequence of poems we find Apollinaire making as skilful a use of rhyme as he ever did in his career. The musical quality of these poems contributes greatly to their significance, as does the fact that they are to be read as a sequence of related poems and not simply as individual pieces. (2)
Let us first illustrate the importance of the rhyme and music of

(1) Cf. M. Davies "Apollinaire" pp. 297-301 & Lock-
bie op.cit. 2

(2) Cf. "Le Médaillon toujours fermé"

these poems before we go on to discuss this sequence in any other respect. Consider the second verse of the first poem -

"Encore un printemps de passé
Je songe à ce qu'il eut de tendre
Adieu saison qui finissez
Vous nous reviendrez aussi tendre" (1)

The rhyme of "tendre" with itself serves not only to emphasise the cyclical nature of love and the seasons, but also to express a certain monotony, rather than the note of hope which one might expect. This is also true of the first stanza, in which the first line holds out an image of desperation that is quickly modulated to something much less tragic by the return of love -

"L'amour est mort entre tes bras
Te souviens-tu de sa rencontre
Il est mort tu la referas
Il s'en revient à ta rencontre"

-again we note the same word used as a rhyme, with just the same effect, that of the past becoming the future, which also means the future becomes the past, and everything is the same.

In the fifth of these little poems, which consist of two quatrains like the first and the third, we find the rhyme scheme - a b c c - the effect of which is ^{to} prolong the sound of the poem in one's mind. This effect is supplemented by the rhythm of the two rhyming lines which is faster than that of the two preceding ones -

"Tu descendais dans l'eau si claire
Je me noyais dans ton regard
Le soldat passe elle se penche
Se détourne et casse une branche"

(1) O.P. p.157 & subsequent quotations from this sequence pp.157-162

- the first two lines appear as complementary but separate statements, while the third and fourth lines are linked by the continuing movement of the woman.

The same pattern emerges in the second stanza -

"Tu flottes sur l'onde nocturne
La flamme est mon coeur renversé
Couleur de l'écaille du peigne
Que reflète l'eau qui te baigne"

If the third line is in this case linked to the second, then it is because it is in opposition to it, and this has the effect of producing a more marked pause at the end of the second line than at the end of the third. Hearing the rhyme of the last two lines, the ear automatically expects to hear a rhyme for at least one of the first two lines of the stanza, and as a result the rhythm of the poem prolongs itself in our inner ear when the poem itself has ended .

The last of these poems, the only one to consist of more than three verses, uses two rhyme schemes - aa bb and a b a b - with the result that the ear is kept listening for the rhyme with much greater attention, so that the change in the last line of the first verse when it appears as the last line of the last verse is all the more marked -

Voici que s'en vient la saison
Et des dédains et du soupçon"

becomes -

"Voici que s'en vient la saison
Des regrets et de la raison"

One must also remark in passing that the change from "soupçon" to "raison" supplies the only two syllables rhyme in the poem.

Having thus noted the skill with which the poet uses traditional means of modulating his meanings and effects, let us now go on to examine how he also, although in a subdued fashion so as not to disturb the regular music of these rhyming quatrains, uses the techniques of surprise to gain certain effects. In the first verse of the first poem, for example, we find this line -

"Il est mort tu la referas"

It is possible that while the "il" refers to love, the "la" refers to the encounter, yet the use of the feminine pronoun goes far beyond this in its effect. Through it we feel that the death of the loved one, and also that the poet in his next encounter with love will not only be taking up the same emotional position as before, but that it will be with regard to the same woman. Thus the poet will have recreated his dead love. All this springs from the juxtaposition of "il" and "la" in the same line, for the ear having heard "Il est mort" expects to hear "tu la referas" and so the effect of the "la" is to take us by surprise, thus extending the banal statement that love comes and goes like the seasons to the much more psychologically profound statement that it is always the same woman that one loves.

With this in mind let us look at the first stanza of the second poem in the sequence -

"Dans le crépuscule fané
Où plusieurs amours se bousculent
Ton souvenir gît enchaîné
Loin de nos ombres qui reculent"

The line which interests us particularly is the third line; to whom does the "ton" refer? If we take this to refer to the poet's particular idea of ^{the} woman he loves, his own version of the "éternel féminin", of whom all the women he has loved are aspects or reflections, then it is immediately obvious why the second line presents us with the undignified sight of "plusieurs amours (qui) se bousculent"; for if all the women in the poet's past, and hence in his memory which is probably the "crépuscule fané", are part of the same idea then his memories of them are bound to conflict and merge with one another. The fact that this is now being left behind is probably due to the fact that he has met a new woman (in Jacqueline Kolb) whom he can love in a different way.

Of course, the ambiguity of "Ton souvenir" allows of many interpretations, but all fit with the situation of Apollinaire feeling he had made a new departure with his "Jolie Rousse". If, for example, one takes the "ton souvenir" to refer to Apollinaire's memory (i.e. the faculty of memory), one may say that he is leaving behind his past as he welcomes his future; or taking the "ton souvenir" to be Apollinaire's remembrance of his past self, then the same conclusion follows.

The really important part of this first verse, however, is the verb "se bousculent", which is totally unexpected in the context. The setting of the "crépuscule fané" and the gentle rhythm of the lines both increase our surprise on being faced with this verb, and it is mostly this surprise which opens our minds to the

significance of the following lines, although, as we have already pointed out, the impression left by the first poem should be carried over into the second, thus re-inforcing this effect.

This impression is reversed by the last verse of the poem-

"La chaîne s'use maille à maille
 Ton souvenir riant de nous
 S'enfuit l'entends-tu qui nous raille
 Et je retombe à tes genoux"

-the last line, in particular, breaks down the barrier which the poet felt separated his present love from his past; this we feel in the use of the "retombe" which makes of the "tes" the general you embracing all the women, and hence the one woman, in the poet's past.

The second verse communicates this sensation of an imminent end in its description -

". un bûcher
 Où le dernier des phénix noire
 Perfection vient se jucher"

-for by its very nature, no Phoenix can ever be the last.

And since this one is perfection, clearly since Apollinaire feels this relationship to be different from all the others, if it should pass, then there could be no more, in spite of all that has been said about love being as cyclical and as certain as the advent of the seasons. So we see the importance of the unexpected, the surprising in conveying of meaning of this poem, just as in the previous one.

The sense of failure with which the second poem ends becomes the point from which the third poem starts. The poet and his present love take their places in the procession beside his former selves and their loves -

"Tu n'as pas surpris mon secret

Déjà le cortège s'avance"

This leaves only a sense of regret at their failure to discover each other's secrets, (at least in this version it is the woman who has not discovered Apollinaire's secret, but it is interesting to note that in a previous manuscript version he had written - "Tu ne m'as pas dit ton secret", while the last verse reversed the positions - "Et ce secret que tu demandes/ Il tremble en moi comme un grelot") and this sense of regret is seen as something which binds them still -

"Mais il nous reste le regret

De n'être pas de connivence"

This image of a failed love is beautifully translated in the first line of the second verse in which the figure of Ophelia, for although there is no mention of her name there can be no doubt as to the source of the image, is transformed into a rose as she floats upon the surface of the stream -

"La rose flotte au fil de l'eau"

The next line, in its use of the word "masques" is perhaps an extension of the first, in the sense that as Ophelia is not seen as Ophelia but as a rose, so the people in the procession are seen as masks rather than as real people, which not only reflects

the fact that they are unreal because they are memories, but suggests an inherent unreality in their nature - which is probably due to the quality of love that is the subject of these poems -

"Les masques ont passé par ~~les~~ bandes"

The personality is reduced to a mask because of the failure of love to be eternal, or rather continuous instead of being cyclical.

Perhaps, then, the secret which the poet conceals is just his realisation of the imperfection of love, and consequently the end of this poem shows us the woman looking for this core of truth, the knowledge of which would destroy their love. It would seem that the use of the adjective "lourd" indicates something of this nature -

"Il tremble en moi comme un grelot

Ce lourd secret que tu quémandes"

The fourth poem is set at nightfall in a garden - a romantic setting that is perfect for a lover's meeting. Yet what takes place is ironically enough a lover's meeting, but only in the sense that the women are the poet's former lovers, and the absence of the poet himself leaves them nothing to do but tell their stories to the night which spreads out their hair in the parody of a lover's caress -

"Le soir tombe et dans le jardin

Elles racontent des histoires

A la nuit qui non sans dédain

Répand leurs chevelures noires"

Without the preceding poems there could be no hint at all to the

reader as to the identity of the "Elles", yet in the context of the sequence there can be no real doubt, especially as this scene seems to follow quite naturally from the "crépuscule fané" in which we saw "plusieurs amours se bousculent".

Equally due to the context is the surprise with ^bwhich we read the first line of the second verse -

"Petits enfants petits enfants

Vos ailes se sont envol^eées"

-for without the preceding poems to tell us that the "elles" of the first verse are women from the poet's past we should have accepted without almost this revelation that they are children. But now we cannot see them as real children, only as adults who were as innocent as children in their belief that love lasts forever. And to this interpretation the second line adds beautifully fresh use of an old, old metaphor, the wings of love - when love dies, the wings which have borne us fly on by themselves and leave us behind like children who have lost a kite or a balloon. How unexpected these images are! Without them, and the surprise we feel on reading these lines, we could not grasp the meaning of the poem.

The next two lines say the same thing in a different way, for the rose, symbol of love, defends itself with its thorns, yet it loses its unequalled perfume -

"Mais rose toi qui te défends

Perds tes odeurs inégalées"

Here the keyword is "inégalées" for when one has loved more than

once the experience is no longer unique, and so the rose's perfume is no longer without equal.

But it is not just that the rose is losing its perfumes, they are being stolen -

"Car voici l'heure du larcin
De plumes de fleurs et de tresses
Cueillez le jet d'eau du bassin
Dont les roses sont les maîtresses"

Stolen, that is, by love itself, because it is a repeatable and not a unique experience. But if the feathers, flowers and tresses, the light and beautiful, but individual things may be stolen, the fountain cannot be picked, however like these things it appears. Which is to say that one may conquer a woman, several women even, all alike yet all different, but one may not conquer love itself (the continuing stream of water) of which each woman is only an aspect - a mistress as opposed to a real love. The poet continues to link one poem to the next, beginning the fifth with an image of a woman going into the clear water -

"Tu descendais dans l'eau si claire"

-which we must see, having read the preceding poems, as one woman becoming all the others, or attempting to, or the poet attempting to make her such. And just as the woman will drown in these waters, so the poet drowns himself in love -

"Je me noyais dans ton regard"

Here we are not prepared for the retro-active effect of the word "noyer"; by drawing a parallel, the poet implies that the woman

will drown, whereas the image need not initially be one of despair, indeed it has a certain pastoral quality, a hint of nymphs bathing that is quite the opposite.

We cannot, if we are at all aware of the facts of Apollinaire's life, read the next two lines without thinking of the relationship between Apollinaire and Madeleine Pagès -

"Le soldat passe elle se penche

Se détourne et casse une branche"

- of the love affair which grew from only one chance encounter, and barely survived their second meeting. But how well the poet translates the same feelings for those who are not aware of this! The "je" of line two becomes the soldier, and from drowning in the woman's eyes, he simply passes out of the picture. The woman turns away, and the rhythm leading up to an unexpected climatic event, breaks a branch. We hear the sound of the branch snapping so clearly that it breaks the spell, the image disappears. Not only is it the symbol of broken relationship, it is a kind of substitute for suicide, for occupying the position of the last of the three actions, which lead on rapidly one to the other, the breaking of the branch cannot remain a simple action.

The next verse opens with a return of the Ophelia image, but this time the wave is perhaps simply the night and not the stream -

"Tu flottes sur l'onde nocturne"

-but the important thing to notice is that Apollinaire does not, either in this case or in the previous one, go as far as the image of drowning. He leaves us with the feeling that this

drowning is imminent, but his rose, or his woman remain on the surface of the stream.

The next lines break not only with the imagery of water, but also with any narrative continuity that may appear to have been established in the first stanza -

"La flamme est mon coeur renversé
Couleur de l'écaille du peigne
Que reflète l'eau qui te baigne"

The flame might normally be expected to have, in the context of a love poem, a sensual value; it might be taken for a symbol of desire, but here it is compared to the poet's upside-down heart, so that it becomes the symbol of the poet's disappointment in love. And the colour of the flame is the colour of the comb, set in the woman's hair and reflected in the water, so that the flame and the water seem to take on the same significance - the flame consuming Apollinaire and the water about to drown the woman. This identification of opposites, flame and water, is made almost hesitatingly in the reader's mind, and the rhythm and rhyme of the poem, as we have already noted, seem to prolong the poem in one's mind, so that this identification lingers on in the silence which follows the last line -

The last of the six poems, the importance of which is immediately noticeable from its length, begins with a line which seems to confirm the idea that the poet is accepting as inevitable the fact that love is imperfect, and sees this as the advent of maturity -

"O ma jeunesse abandonnée
Comme une guirlande fanée
Voici que s'en vient la saison
Et des dédains et du soupçon"

-yet still there is the reluctance to accept fully, so that maturity is seen as the age of suspicion and of disdain . Youth left behind, then, does not leave regret for lost youth as one might expect, but rather regret that life, in particular love, is not as perfect as it seemed.

The second verse seizes upon this idea of experience revealing the gap between appearance and reality, and opens on an image which reverses the imitation of nature in art, giving the imitation of art by nature -

"Le paysage est fait de toiles

Il coule un faux fleuve de sang"

But what the poet is doing here is to corrupt reality so that he may situate us in a land of the imagination where there are no impossibles. Thus the second line describes a river of blood as false, yet it is still flowing. Whereas the first line of this verse is unusual but still in keeping with the general tone and setting of the sequence, the second is a savage breaking down of the near pastoral tone. Typically, Apollinaire delays the word which carries the weight of the line until last, for the idea of "un faux fleuve" is perfectly in keeping with the setting of gardens and water jets, but when we read the word "sang", the dream-like quality of the preceding poems disappears entirely.

The next line is pretty enough to have belonged in the peaceful garden setting had it not been for the "fleuve de sang"; and now the characters who have been only shadows so that up to this point the action which has taken place has been like a masque

or shadow play, are replaced by a clown -

"Et sous l'arbre fleuri d'étoiles

Un clown est l'unique passant"

There is no more mention of love, and the clown is described as alone - the poet's deception, wandering alone in the painted setting which he knows to be false and so he disregards the stars on the tree, because he knows they are unobtainable.

This verse is calculated to dispel the atmosphere of the civilised garden in which love played its games - the clown, although the author chose his symbol, is not seen as a pale-faced Pierrot, or a sad Harlequin, he has his identity restricted to his function, and is all the more effective for it.

The third verse partially ^srestores the setting of the other poems before in another way, transforming it into something more sinister -

"Un froid rayon poudroie et joue

Sur les décors et sur ta joue

Un coup de revolver un cri

Dans l'ombre un portrait a souri"

Undoubtedly, the "froid rayon" carries all the overtones of the "cold light of day", yet the choice of the verb "poudroie" restores a little of the stylised artificiality of the preceding poems, and once this is done, we are faced with the sudden breaking of the silence, caused by a revolver shot and a cry. Nothing tells us who has been shot, if anyone has, or who fired the shot - the only result of this event which we are told of is that in the

shadow a portrait smiled.

Reality is completely reduced to a shadow, and we are left to guess at the meaning. We might well think that the shot is the poet committing suicide, especially after the information which the first verse gives us about his attitude to his present situation, as well as the only slightly concealed bitterness of the second verse. As for the portrait, it could equally well be a portrait of the poet himself, as a young man (1), or a portrait of a former mistress.

The first line of the next verse suggests that the portrait is of the person who has been shot, since -

"La vitre du cadre est brisée"

-but this line also refers, undoubtedly, to the framework of the poem which has been shattered by this too real event. And the following lines lend another shade of meaning to it -

"Un air qu'on ne peut définir

Hésite entre son et pensée

Entre avenir et souvenir"

The poet is aware that a line has been crossed, a more subtle line than that which divides youth from experience, so that the clarity of the images which have led up to this point is replaced by the uncertainty of a tune which he cannot quite remember, which he cannot even be sure that he hears, and which may be the music of his past or even of his future. Thus the concluding verse of the poem and of the sequence takes up the refrain of the first verse of the poem, but modulates it subtly to -

(1) Cf. "Zone" " ta vie

C'est un tableau pendu dans un sombre musée"

"Voici que s'en vient la saison

Des regrets et de la raison"

In this last poem, then, we find that the poet has chosen to retain the calm level of expression, which is almost that of understatement, except for the second verse, and upon this shattering of the image depends our understanding of the transition from the refrain of the first verse to that of the last. This transition appears as one of the major themes of both of the poems which remain to be analysed - "Les Collines" and "La Jolie Rousse", as can be seen immediately from the following quotations -

"Au-dessus de Paris un jour

Combattaient deux grands avions

L'un était rouge et l'autre noir

• • • • •

L'un était toute ma jeunesse

Et l'autre c'était l'avenir" (1)

"Me voici devant tous un homme plein de sens"

"Ma jeunesse est morte ainsi que le printemps" (2)

In our examination of these two poems we shall be concerned to show that they are an illustration of the poetic theory that they preach and that, to a great extent, the way in which they do this depends upon the techniques of violence as they have been

(1) O.P. p. 171

(2) O.P. pp. 313 & 314

defined and illustrated in the course of this study. We have pointed out to what extent the use of these techniques was in keeping with Apollinaire's nature and with the conflicts which he felt within himself; this the poet himself acknowledges on several occasions (1), and this he sets out at the beginning of "Les Collines" -

"Au-dessus de Paris un jour
Combattaient deux grands avions

• • •

Ils se combattaient avec rage"

Nor does Apollinaire content himself with stating that this is the case, he illustrates the violence of this conflict with a series of ⁱsmiles -

"Ainsi fit contre Lucifer
L'Archange aux ailes radieuses

Ainsi le calcul au problème

Ainsi la nuit contre le jour

Ainsi attaque ce que j'aime

Mon amour ainsi l'ouragan

Déracine l'arbre qui crie"

-some of which go beyond the simple function of a ⁱsmile and become a much deeper illustration of violence, for if we expect such comparisons as Lucifer fighting the Archangel, and accept the more unusual comparison of calculation attacking a problem, we are in no

(1) Cf. "Du coton dans les oreilles" - "Les points d'impacts dans mon âme toujours en guerre".

way ready for the comparison^p to the poet's love attacking what he loves (1). The paradox of this latter comparison illustrates the degree to which the conflicting aspects of the poet's nature were bound up with one another, and it is to be noticed that the poet sets out to achieve the maximum of surprise by reversing the order of the normal sentence, so postponing the paradox to the last possible moment.

This description of violent conflict is followed by a sudden switch to calm, which again we see as an obviously deliberate device employed by the poet to surprise and shock his readers -

"Mais vois quelle douceur partout
Paris comme une jeune fille
S'éveille langoureusement
Secoue sa longue chevelure
Et chante sa belle chanson"

As the function of these opening verses is clearly to set the scene for us, it is also appropriate that they should do this in terms of the techniques of violence as we have seen them function in many poems; that is to say that they should prevent the imagination of the reader from taking too strong a grasp upon the imagery, and consequently fitting it to his own experience. Thus the poet seems to prepare a certain situation for something but then he leads us in another direction, as with the line "Ainsi attaque ce que j'aime/ Mon amour ...", and also with the sudden

(1) Cf. the end of "Liens" :

"O sens 8 sens chéris

o o o o o o o o o o

Ennemis de tout ce que j'aime encore"

The beginning and the end of "Calligrammes" show the continuity of means and themes.

change, like the movement of a film camera, from sky to ground that corresponds to the movements from violence to calm.

No sooner, however, are we allowed to glimpse this conventional yet effective image of Paris, than the poet returns to the initial imagery -

"Où est donc tombée ma jeunesse

Tu vois que flambe l'avenir"

The future remains blazing in the sky, but we do not take this to mean that it ^{is} fatally damaged, although clearly the poet intends us to understand that youth, if lost, has still left its mark upon the future; rather this description has the effect of identifying the survivor with the sun, described in the first verse of the poem -

"Tandis qu'au zénith flamboyait

L'éternel avion solitaire"

-this being an association which is strengthened by the theme of the sun in Apollinaire's poetry as a whole. Thus the future of the poet, which was the surviving aeroplane, is now identified with the future in general, so that the lines which follow use this as their justification for the poet's claims to be able to speak for the future -

"Sache que je parle aujourd'hui

Pour annoncer au monde entier

Qu'enfin est né l'art de prédire"

It is clear from the poem so far that the poet feels that his knowledge has been won through suffering (as we saw ^{was} the case with the last poem of the series "Vitam Impendere Amori"), hence

his description of the dogfight between two aeroplanes applies not only to his inherent^{nature}, but also to the violence of his experience of life, which by this time had included the trenches of the war, a serious wound followed by a major operation and unstable health in the subsequent months. If we now compare the opening of "La Jolie Rousse", we find that the poet says almost the same things, in a different way, yet in a way which still owes something to the desire to surprise -

"Me voici devant tous un homme plein de sens

Connaissant la vie et de la mort ce qu'un vivant peut
connaître

Ayant éprouvé les douleurs et les joies de l'amour

Ayant su quelquefois imposer ses idées

Connaissant plusieurs langages

Ayant pas mal voyagé

Ayant vu la guerre dans l'Artillerie et l'Infanterie

Blessé à la tête trépané sous le chloroforme" (1)

Here the poet is expressing himself without recourse to imagery, (he is also covering a greater area of his experience in detail than in "Les Collines"), yet it seems to us that he is seeking to surprise his readers by omitting any elaboration of his experiences which are, after all, considerable - love, travel, war, illness - and this surprise is aimed at re-inforcing the statement made in the first line. Apollinaire is trying to convince us of the stability that his maturity has brought him, by refusing to be drawn into an elaboration of his experience.

(1) O.P. p. 313

All this is , of course, leading up to something and the reader is aware of this, yet the tone is one of simplicity which convinces us of the truth of the statements being made. What the poet is leading up to is just this -

"Je sais d'ancien et de nouveau autant qu'un homme seul
pourrait des deux savoir

Et sans m'inquiéter aujourd'hui de cette guerre

Entre nous et pour nous mes amis

Je juge cette longue querelle de la tradition et de l'
invention

De l'Ordre et de l'Aventure"

Although Dada was already launched on its destructive path when the poet wrote these lines, there was still very little extension of artistic attitudes into the political dimension of public life - in spite of the several scandals which the activities of the avant - garde had aroused; therefore we cannot ~~totally~~ take Apollinaire's statement as one which applies to anarchy and to tradition in society. This does not mean, however, that we consider Apollinaire's statement must apply only to the arts in the narrowest sense; as we have already said in respect of "La Victoire", Apollinaire's conception of the function of the imagination goes beyond its role in poetry and this emerges clearly from both of the poems here under discussion. When we read these lines, then, the idea which we receive is that the poet is setting out to defend the activities of the avant - garde with respect to life as well as to art, but not on the level of political activity that might so easily be understood by the present age.

This position is slightly enlarged upon in "Les Collines" to the extent that the poet sees himself as able to speak with

-rity because he possesses the ability to look into the future-

"Certains hommes sont des collines
 Qui s'élèvent d'entre les hommes
 Et voient au loin tout l'avenir
 Mieux que s'il était le présent
 Plus net que s'il était le passé"

This is not the first time that we find Apollinaire making this claim (1), but this is the first time that we find the conjunction of the claim to maturity and to wisdom, gained through harsh experience, with it. This not only lends an extra air of authority to the poet's claims, it also shows quite clearly that he had come to terms with himself with regard to his fears of the power of the subconscious mind and of the liberated imagination. Whereas both "Le Brasier" and "Les Fiançailles" require the sacrifice of the poet in order for him to be able to speak of the results of his observing the imagination, we now find that he acknowledges the sacrifices of his youth (with all the loss of innocence that that implies - especially in the last poem of "Vitam Impendere Amori") but that he is otherwise able to face the consequences of his courageous action not only with equanimity but with joy and anticipation.

All this emerges with great clarity from the following verses of "Les Collines" which seem to proceed from the verse quoted above. But although the poet's ideas are clear, the nature of the experience cannot be understood on the level of statement and he

(1) Cf. in particular "Le Brasier" and "Les Fiançailles"

relies upon the surprise and mystery of his imagery to make us feel, in as far as is possible, the full depths of what he has to convey to us. Thus the first lines which follow the claim to be able to see the future are -

"Ornement des temps et des routes

Passe et dure sans t'arrêter"

-in which the poet seems to be saying that the conception of a time stream which leads to the metaphor of life as a journey is no more essential to us, although we cannot break free from it entirely, than an ornament. If we choose to remain the prisoners of such a conception, however, we shall be like snakes hissing against the wind, not only will we not be heard, we shall also be acting completely in vain, for the "Psylles", the ancient people reputed to possess the powers of charming snakes and of being immune to their bite, have passed from the earth -

"Laissons sibilier les serpents

En vain contre le vent du sud

Les Psylles et l'onde ont péri"

-their immunity did not protect them from the bite of the serpent Time.

Man is on the verge of a new age, that of the thinking machine (X), so that the Earth may be said to be about to bring forth life again, this time fertilised by Man and not (it is implied) by God -

"Ordre des temps si les machines

Se prenaient enfin à penser

Sur les plages de pierreries

Des vagues d'or se briseraient

L'écume serait mère encore"

(However serious Apollinaire may be, he never disdains the use of a pun, as here on *mer/mère*, in order to keep us aware of the many facets of any reality). It appears as though the poet is placing his assertion that Man can free himself from the tyranny of time by recreating himself, in the balance of a particular moment in history, which is not necessarily definable as the year in which the poem was written. Certainly the next verses partakes of the quality of a hymn to mankind -

"Moins haut que l'homme vont les aigles

C'est lui qui fait la joie des mers "

-and in particular to man the inventor who through his science can overcome the limitations that God or Nature put upon his physical environment. The poet then seems to draw a parallel suggesting that man will, in the same way, break free from his spiritual limitations. As we read the two lines quoted above we inevitably think of the aeroplane and the ship or submarine, but the poet, quite deliberately, only offers us these images to transform them into something else, into something of another and more subtle order, thus re-inforcing the parallel which we indicate above -

"Comme il dissipe dans les airs

L'ombre et les spleens vertigineux

Par où l'esprit rejoint le songe "

The release of the powers of imagination into the domain of the conscious mind, this is what the poet is proclaiming, and this, for him, is the way through which Man can escape the destiny that is imposed upon him. The results of this powerful union will be

as wonderful as the aeroplane , and will include things which the human imagination has not prefigured, as Icarus prefigured the aeroplane, because hitherto the imagination has been too shackled by a particular view of reality. But the developments which will arise from this union will go far beyond the possibilities of the machine, so that if the poet in this verse seems to be hinting at the scientific realisation of ideas which have up to now even been beyond the imagination -

"Voici le temps de la magie

Il s'en revient attendez-vous

A des milliards de prodiges

Qui n'ont fait naître aucune fable

Nul les ayant imaginés"

-then he goes on immediately to proclaim -

"Profondeurs de la conscience

On vous explorera demain"

But we must remember that the poet is the herald of this new and marvellous age, and that he is already possessed of the power to see into the future, which presumably he derives from the constant efforts he has made towards the liberating of his own imagination in his poetry. Still the poet admits that not even he has plumbed the depths of the unconscious mind, but he points the way for us that whole new worlds await, whole new ranges of experience which will be ours if we are prepared to look -

"Et qui sait quels êtres vivants

Seront tirés de ces abîmes

Avec des univers entiers"

If there has as yet been no specific mention in "Les Collines" of the poet's attempting to reach these paths through his poetry, this is left in no doubt in "La Jolie Rousse", in which it is clear from the last passage referred to that the poet is concerned with his own writing (as well as the work of others).

Thus speaking for those whom he has categorised as seeking adventure, the poet declares -

"Nous ne sommes pas vos ennemis

Nous voulons vous donner de vastes et d'étranges domaines

Où le mystère en fleurs s'offre à qui veut le cueillir

Il y a des feux nouveaux des couleurs jamais vues"

The Promethean aspect of the task which the poet and his friends have set themselves is touched upon but not overemphasised.

Yet we are left in no doubt from this text as to the importance which the poet attaches to the role of the imagination, and surely we cannot fail to see that these mysteries which he offers us, the vast and strange domains are much more than the simple whims of his fancy that they would be were the charge that the poet is only a "fantaisiste". One has only to compare the light and charming quality of fantasy which informs the poetry of Apollinaire's friend André Salmon, and which Apollinaire himself appreciated and praised in an article accompanied by lengthy quotations that he wrote in "Vers et Prose" in 1908 (1). It is in this article that Apollinaire likened the work of his friend's imagination, detached from vulgar reality, to that of the "Ver Zamir" which "Sans outils pouvait bâtir le temple de Jérusalem" - and the importance of this image in "Le Brasier" has already been revealed (2).

(1) O.C. t.3 p. 822

(2) Cf. Chapter two section four

The important difference which lies between the work of the two men is the impact and lasting impression that is made by Apollinaire's imagery and this, as we have outlined throughout this study, is due to the techniques of violence which the poet has exploited to create, in the fullest sense of the term, the poetry of his imagination.

Thus the proclamation of the wonders which are to be observed in the new and strange domains which the imagination opens to us is followed by the statement -

"Mille phantasmes impondérables

Auxquels il faut donner de la réalité"

-which leaves no room for doubt as to the poet's consciousness of the need for art to give substance to the creatures of the imagination.

The ability of the imagination to transcend the limitations imposed upon us by the dimensions of time and place are brought out in both poems -

"Voici s'élever des prophètes

Comme au loin des collines bleues

Ils sauront des choses précises

Comme croient savoir les savants

Et nous transporteront partout"

"Il y a aussi le temps qu'on peut chasser ou faire revenir"

Although "La Jolie Rousse" is clearer in indicating that the lands which the imagination travels in are not simply exotic paradises to which the mind escapes -

"Nous voulons explorer la bonté contrée énorme où tout se tait"

- but lands which in their unreality have a direct bearing upon our understanding of reality. This, however, emerges gradually from "Les Collines", for the coming age which is heralded in this poem is revealed to be one in which spiritual values have their due part -

"L'âge en vient où on étudiera
 Tout ce que c'est^{que}/de souffrir"

"On cherchera dans l'homme même
 Beaucoup plus qu'on n'y a cherché
 On scrutera sa volonté
 Et quelle force naîtra d'elle
 Sans machine et sans instrument"

There can be no doubt that the poet is proclaiming the re-birth of man in an age which will permit of the liberation of his imagination from the strait-jacket of "realistic" perceptions of the universe. The development of this theme in "Les Collines" is pursued at much greater length than in "La Jolie Rousse" and so we shall now look at the former before returning to the parallels which may be drawn between the two poems. The verses which now follow the lines quoted above make claims which are less modest than the claim to deep maturity that the poet advances in "La Jolie Rousse", for having said that Man will be put to the test, Apollinaire goes on to say that he himself has already undergone an experience which has tested him and given to him a detachment which allows him to write these lines. As in an earlier verse Apollinaire has proclaimed that the time of magic is now upon us, so he now adds to his powers the awareness of the spirits of our ancestors, who, he claims, are still among us -

"Les secourables mânes errent
 Se compénétrant parmi nous
 Depuis les temps qui nous rejoignent
 Rien n'y finit rien n'y commence
 Regarde la bague à ton doigt"

Inescapably the ring of the last line becomes a symbol of the poet's magical powers, and we are reminded of the churchman's ring, symbol of his marriage to the church. Also the ring is the symbol of enclosed time that joins the present to the past. Thus Apollinaire reveals himself to be forever committed to this way of life, the life of the spirit and of the imagination, and now that the critical moment has come he is here to influence the course of events with the powers which he has acquired -

"Temps des déserts des carrefours
 Temps des places et des collines
 Je viens ici faire des tours
 Où joue son rôle un talisman
 Mort et plus subtil que la vie"

Like the ring, the talisman is only a hint of the poet's powers; he does not reveal its nature to us, intending that the mystery should make it seem more effective .

But now he reveals, as he did in "Le Brasier" and in "Les Fiançailles" that he has detached himself from this world, and that ^{it is} ~~this~~ which has given him such remarkable powers -

"Je me suis enfin détaché
 De toutes choses naturelles
 Je peux mourir mais non pécher
 Et ce qu'on n'a jamais touché
 Je l'ai touché je l'ai palpé"

One begins to feel that the poet needs to produce something more concrete than these statements concerning his powers - one feels, in short, the lack of imagery which can persuade us of the truth of what the poet is saying. Yet still there is the mystery which the poet deliberately creates and which spurs us to read on until he is ready to reveal something more than that he has it in his power to make revelations .

In the next verse but one, Apollinaire does introduce an image which stimulates our imaginations -

"Bien souvent j'ai plané si haut
 Si haut qu'adieu toutes les choses
 Les étrangetés les fantômes
 Et je ne veux plus admirer
 Ce garçon qui mime l'effroi"

This sudden doubling of his own personality in this concrete form is one of the most common aspects of Apollinaire's introspective poetry, yet here it comes just in time, in our opinion, to save the reader's interest, as it proves that the poet is aware of himself at a point when he might have sounded pompous, although, in fact, he does not. In this image of the young man pretending fear, we must certainly see Apollinaire himself, but might we not also go further and ask whether this is not Apollinaire referring to himself as he was at the time of writing "Le Brasier" and "Les Fiançailles", in which he proclaimed himself to be afraid of the consequences of what he was doing? This difference of attitude to the release of the imagination and its effect upon the poet is one which we have indicated before and it is one which we believe to have great

importance in any consideration of these poems; it seems to us that Apollinaire himself could not fail to be aware of this and in that case, these lines would seem to be a clear enough reference to the poet's sincerity on this occasion.

The next stanza is a farewell to youth which is the picturesque equivalent of the verses from the last poem of the "Vitam Impendere Amori" sequence, being charged here with memories of the Roman carnivals of his childhood. This is followed by an image of the poet beside the Mediterranean, again a scene from his childhood, but in these lines there is something more important -

"Adieu jeunesse blanc Noël
Quand la vie n'était qu'une étoile
Dont je contemplais le reflet
Dans la mer Méditerranée
Plus nacrée que les météores"

That youth is the time of innocence is no new revelation, but in these lines Apollinaire expresses his innocence in terms of distance ~~ce~~ from the star that is life. From this it follows that his new knowledge and powers must have come from a deep involvement in life ~~fe~~ itself. Certainly this is consonant with the idea put forward several verses ago that there is nothing new in the world -

"Depuis les temps qui nous rejoignent/Rien n'y finit rien n'y commence"
- and therefore any special powers which the poet may have acquired, have been found through looking where others have not looked - or at least not looked closely enough.

There is another clearly discernible thread running through these lines, one which most obviously manifests itself in the images of whiteness and light - the white Christmas, that was youth (clearly not the vulgar Anglo-Saxon associations), the light of the star that is life and the description of the Mediterranean as more like mother-of-pearl than meteors. The poet is building up an atmosphere of purity, and not only with respect to what has been left behind since life is compared to a star and it is from his comprehension of life that the poet's new powers stem.

The next stanza continues the description of the Mediterranean in terms of whiteness, purity, peace and harmony which extend themselves to the poet's youth as well as the setting. Then, once this atmosphere is well established comes the line -

"Je m'arrête pour regarder "

which immediately has the double connotation of stopping the movement of the youth who is the poet's former self, and of stopping the poem itself in order to consider what has been done so far. And this stop is brought about by a change of imagery, not from the real to the unreal since what has made up the description of the Mediterranean has been unreal enough, but rather from the unreal, almost the precious, to the "surreal". In the next few lines the poet sees himself looking at his shadow as a man looking at his past, but that past is described as a serpent as well as the poet's self. Also, playing on the meaning of the word "suis" the poet is able to say that he is the serpent which is his shadow which follows the flute (is the flute) which he is playing -

"Sur la pelouse incandescente

Un serpent erre c'est moi-même

Qui suis la flûte dont je joue

Et le fouet qui châtie les autres"

But, the image of the musician is surely an image of the poet as a poet, and therefore the poet is saying that he is his own poetry, which leads us to see that the final line is not simply an additional comparison based on the similarity of the shape of the serpent/shadow to a whip, but in fact a realisation that the kind of poetry which he is writing must be painful and destructive to those who cling to the old ideas of poetry. Moreover, a few stanzas later Apollinaire, presumably addressing himself to other poets, demands that they be silent since he is the only genuine voice - therefore this punishment is justified.

The importance of this stanza, however, lies in its imagery which we have qualified as "surreal", which is to say that it is completely the product of the imagination. Of course, there is an easily discernible base of reality - the poet's shadow on a lawn illuminated by strong sunlight, but this is totally transformed by the author's imagination so that we do not perceive this basic "reality" unless we want to. In place of the series of comparisons and metaphors which are used to describe the Mediterranean, we now find that with one word the poet changes the nature of the lawn, so that what follows is already set in a different world. The poet has stopped saying that he is a magician and has begun to prove it. Thus he offers us the strange and sinister image -

- "Sur la pelouse incandescente/Un serpent erre", and as we are reacting to this he brusquely transforms it by adding "C'est moi-même". But as we know that the image of the shadow is irrevocably connected to his past in Apollinaire's work, and from the context here of examination of his past followed by the line - "Je m'arrête pour regarder" - we find that the poet is looking back on his former self, not as the purity of youth, but rather almost as someone in hell. But then again this image is transformed by the next line so that no sooner is this impression conveyed than another aspect of the poet is revealed to us - an aspect which is undoubtedly viewed as a saving grace. The serpent following the flute which the poet plays, becomes that flute; but since the serpent is the poet himself, then the act of writing is seen here as playing upon one's own personality as on an instrument.

What makes this image stand out especially is the force with which all the various aspects of it are embodied in these few words and bound together so closely. The image is in fact a complex which far transcends the banal situation which may be considered to be the reality that is behind it; complex, that is, because of its paradoxical nature which involves the personality of the poet in all the aspects which are presented to us visually.

The last line of the stanza serves to tie up with the beginning of the next, which hints that if Apollinaire is here the whip that punishes others, he has not only the right to do this because he himself has passed through the ways of suffering which he proclaims in this verse -

"Il vient un temps pour la souffrance
 Il vient un temps pour la bonté
 Jeunesse adieu voici le temps
 Où l'on connaîtra l'avenir
 Sans mourir de sa connaissance"

And the result of this is the crucial line that ends the stanza. Crucial it is, because it is what divides the position of the poet in this period from that which he took up in the poems of 1908, and to which we have already referred in discussing the lines-
 "Je ne veux plus admirer/ Cegarçon qui mime l'effroi". (1)

This then, is the moment of privilege which Apollinaire hails as -

" . . . le temps de la grâce ardente"

which immediately leads us to think of the lines that follow from where we left off in discussing "La Jolie Rousse" -

"Voici que vient l'été la saison violente

Et ma jeunesse est morte ainsi que le printemps

O Soleil c'est le temps de la Raison ardente"

What in the ^{one} poem is grace becomes in the other reason, but in both the essential adjective remains unchanged -"ardente". Clearly, the poet feels himself to have attained not just a state of grace, or simply the age of reason, he feels that he has gained access to a whole new dimension which is related to these things but still surpasses them through its intensity. Thus "Les Collines" continues by saying that Man will go through seven years (the magic/mystic number) of testing which will end in his becoming divine, and

(1) Vide Supra, Section 4, Ch. 2.

from this follows -

"Il découvrira d'autres mondes

L'esprit languit comme des fleurs"

We surrender one rational concept of the world to gain many new worlds, the worlds of the imagination which are born from the resting intelligence (rational intelligence) as naturally as fruit follows from a flowering plant -

"Dont naissent les fruits savoureux

Que nous regarderons mûrir

Sur la colline ensoleillée"

As the poet's voice takes on more authority, so he justifies what he is saying, for if the next verse is a rather peremptory silencing of all other poets, an injunction which leaves no room for doubt as to the poet's certainty that he alone is right -

"Ne mêlez pas l'ivraie au blé"

-then it is followed by two verses which like the description of the serpent are the pure product of the poet's imagination -

"Un vaisseau s'en vint dans le port

Un grand navire pavoisé

Mais nous n'y trouvâmes personne

Qu'une femme belle et vermeille

Elle y gisait assassinée"

Scott Bates has pointed out the similarities that exist between this image and the strange young woman who appears at the end of "Couleur du Temps", and this was for him and is for us just one indication that "Les Collines" is contemporary with the poems and plays of the period 1916-1918 (1). In each case, the woman is a

(1) Cf. Scott Bates "Les Collines" p.31 in R.V.L.M. 1962

symbol of the old ideas of beauty (old, that is, as far as Apollinaire was concerned) which has now been replaced, but in "Les Collines" we are faced with this image without the explanation of its significance. There are some six stanzas between this and the lines -

"C'est de souffrance et de bonté

Que sera faite la beauté

Plus parfaite que n'était celle

Qui venait des proportions"

-and therefore we must react to this image purely as an image. The poet has set out to introduce his image in the most unexpected way; not only is the preceding verse one in which the statement is far more important than the imagery, which is almost on the level of cliché, there is also the order of presentation of the key image which is intended to surprise us, for the image of a ship reaching the port in Apollinaire's work is associated with the finding of one's self.

So, suddenly we read this beautiful and mysterious verse, after listening to what borders on the arrogant. A ship bedecked with flags sails into the port and on board there is no one but "une femme belle et vermeille" who has been murdered. Without any reason to associate this woman with the beauty of the past, we still feel a great sense of loss. The suddenness of the image ~~is~~ involves us in it; the vision of a stately galleon makes us feel the dignity and calm and the last line destroys the picture which is just beginning to form in our minds of the beautiful woman. Then we read the next verse and find that there is no connection, that we are not to be satisfied in our curiosity

as to the identity of this woman. The image is left to function entirely on its own and the poet has made it as unexpected, as surprising as possible so that we shall feel its full impact. The mystery that he leaves serves also to indicate that we have lost something which we did not really know.

The construction of the poem is now clear to us; we read several verses in which the poet is concerned more to state a situation than to make us feel it, although he offers us the poignance of his regret for his lost youth in the line - "Jeunesse adieu jasmin du temps". In this context the few images which he really intends to carry the weight of the poem become the more effective for their sudden apparitions. This is not to say that the rest of the poem is prosaic - far from it; the poet stimulates our appetite for the substance of the poem through the almost incantatory and semi-mystic tone of many of the verses.

The image of the ship is followed by another, equally strange, equally unexpected, but with no apparent relation to the former -

"Une autre fois je mendiais
L'on ne me donna qu'une flamme
Dont je fus brûlé jusqu'aux lèvres
Et je ne pus dire merci
Torche que rien ne peut éteindre"

For Scott Bates (1) these lines are a résumé of the experience of "Les Fiançailles" and we would certainly agree that they refer to the experience which the poet underwent at that time. The interesting thing is that what then seemed to be the supreme experience

(1) Op.cit.

is now seen as part of the process, certainly important but still only part, which has brought the poet to this point of understanding. The thematic and material links which exist between this poem and the poems of 1908 are too substantial to be ignored, and this image clearly points to the importance of "Les Fiançailles" in the evolution of Apollinaire's poetry. The fact that Apollinaire himself is using the poem as a point of reference seems more than adequate justification for L.C. Breunig's calling it his "Demoiselles d'Avignon". But again, the reader's experience of the image in the poem is unconditioned by any reference to external factors. He is offered the image of the poet as a beggar receiving what is clearly some kind of spiritual experience, even before the last two lines prove that the fire was not real.

Of course, the imagery of purification by fire is much more traditional than the imagery of the preceding verse, but this verse is none the less surprising for that. The fact that it is juxtaposed with the image of the ship suggests to us, especially as the mystery surrounding the dead woman leads us to expect some kind of explanation or hint in the following verse, that there is some kind of relationship between the two experiences, and if we consider that we found to be the theme of "Les Fiançailles" we may then see the precise nature of that link. "Les Fiançailles" is, as we have said, a poem about the poet's attitude towards the act of writing poetry, and its conclusion is that one may not in the twentieth century write in the style of the nineteenth. It is also a poem about the same kind of spiritual experience

that is touched on in this verse of "Les Collines" ; this being the moving force behind the poet's unsparing analysis of himself and his poetry. Clearly the same relationship exists between the two verses of "Les Collines" which concern us here, but in the context of this poem that relationship is only suggested by the juxtaposition of these two verses although this is strengthened by the fact that the prominence of the imagery is remarkable in these verses in comparison with those which precede and those which follow.

We must not overlook the fact that in this description of his receiving the flame, the only detail which the poet singles out is - "Dont je fus brûlé jusqu'aux lèvres". This clearly suggests that his voice, i.e. his poetry will be affected most by the experience, and, indeed, the next line, in telling us that the poet was unable to say thank you, implies that the writing of this poem is an act of thanks. Thus we find that the image of the dead woman is bound, in retrospect, more closely to the poet's writing than was at first apparent; but we must once again emphasise that the poet's way of doing this is to make his imagery as surprising as possible, and to link the two images only by placing them together - in other words two of the main aspects of the techniques of violence as we have defined them and isolated them in Apollinaire's poetry.

The verse which follows confers upon the experience of the purification by fire the meaning of the gift of perceiving the depths of one's own nature -

"Où donc es-tu mon ami
Qui rentrais si bien en toi-même
Qu'un abîme seul est resté
Où je me suis jeté moi-même
Jusqu'aux profondeurs incolores"

- but we note the suggestion of the third line that too much introspection is likely to lead to the loss of the self. Then the rhyme of "toi-même" with "moi-même" suggests that these two people are in fact the same person, so that the loss of self seems to be the price paid for the kind of spiritual rebirth that Apollinaire has undergone.

In almost the same way there is the suggestion, in "La Jolie Rousse", that it is by losing himself in his love for the woman that the poet arrives at the time of the "Raison ardente" -

" Et j'attends

Pour la suivre toujours la forme noble et douce

Qu'elle prend afin que je l'aime seulement

Elle vient et m'attire ainsi qu'un fer l'aimant

Elle a l'aspect charmant

D'une adorable rousse"

All that seems ephemeral in the experience that Apollinaire has undergone is reversed by the imagery, and made durable -

"Ses cheveux sont d'or on dirait
Un bel éclair qui durerait
Ou ces flammes qui se pavant
Dans les roses-thé qui se fanent" .

The lightning flash is prolonged and the quality of fire that the

roses hold briefly in their short existence is caught and held. In the same way, having plunged to the depths of his being in "Les Collines" the poet now has attained the abstraction from self which enables him to observe the process and to watch himself return from these unknown lands -

"Et j'entends revenir mes pas
 Le long des sentiers que personne
 N'a parcourus j'entends mes pas
 A toute heure ils passent là-bas
 Lents ou pressés ils vont ou viennent"

Yet for the first time we seem to perceive a unity underlying this multiplication of self which is such a common theme of Apollinaire's work. Consider the unease which arises out of this same theme in "Zone", clearly the effect of these lines is quite different. The poet seems to have accepted the fragmentary nature of experience which lead to so much tension in many of his poems ("Le Voyageur" for example), so that in his poem we still find the same perceptions and understanding of the nature of life, but the point of view has altered slightly so that these things are accepted now.

The next verse begins with an image of winter which may explain the last line of the verse, or perhaps we should look elsewhere for an explanation -

"Hiver toi qui te fais la barbe
 Il neige et je suis malheureux
 J'ai traversé le ciel splendide
 Où la vie est une musique
 Le sol est trop blanc pour mes yeux"

-the third and fourth lines of this verse are a clear allusion to the experience of "Le Brasier", which, it will be remembered, also returns in "La Victoire" (1); it may be therefore that the final line is connected to that experience, or it may be connected to an analogous experience such as that of the opening lines of "Cortège".-

"Oiseau tranquille au vol inverse oiseau

Qui nidifie en l'air

A la limite où notre sol brille déjà

Baisse ta deuxième paupière la terre t'éblouit"

If we attempt to follow the verse from the first line we may find it easier, having pointed out these analogies, to see the thread which connects these different aspects. The poet is unhappy because it is winter - the symbolism of winter needs no further explanation, but it is perhaps not superfluous to point out that Apollinaire had qualified summer as the season of "La Raison ardente", therefore winter must be all the more difficult a time for him - the whiteness of the snow dazzles him, although he has crossed the skies, it is the light of the earth which is too much for his eyes. No longer is it the "divine masquerade" which is a source of awe to the poet, but ordinary life itself.

In the next verse the poet announces that knowledge of the future comes through acceptance of the prodigies which he has been writing about - a clear indication that for Apollinaire the way to look forwards was to look inwards. The verse which follows this proclamation is that which hails the new beauty which is

(1) Vide Supra.

made of "Souffrance et (de) bonté", and now that the new beauty has come, winter and summer merge into one season for the poet -

"Il neige et je brûle et je tremble"

-who has penetrated to the timeless core of life. The unhappiness that is brought on by winter, the purification of the fire and the trembling of the poet who feels the power of the word -

"La parole est soudaine et c'est un Dieu qui tremble" (1)

-are here combined in the prelude of the most astonishing sequence in the poem - the final release of the poet's imaginative energies which completely transcends all categories of rational and irrational.

"Maintenant je suis assis à ma table

J'écris ce que j'ai ressenti

Et ce que j'ai chanté là-haut"

With these words the poet begins this sequence and it is of prime importance that we note his quite deliberate effort to inform us that this sequence is written, that is that he has composed it as an interpretation of his "unreal" experience. The two last lines of this verse immediately plunge us into the surreal world in which these images are to be situated -

"Un arbre élancé que balance

Le vent dont les cheveux s'envolent"

-Two elements of the normal world that we know are transformed in these lines; we cannot really say that the wind has been personified, it is simply that its motion is seen as streaming hair; as for the tall tree, it becomes almost a symbol of the uprooting

(1) La Victoire O.P. p. 311

of normality at the hands of the wind of the imagination (1).

The next verse begins with what has been called a still life of an ^{un}usual kind and this is certainly true; moreover, the editors of the Pléiade edition of Apollinaire's poetry have noted that this sequence of images which we are about to examine is -

"Une vision irréaliste qu'on a parfois rapprochée de certaines toiles de Chagall" (2) (and this reveals the importance of the visual element in these verses. Let us consider the lines which follow -

"Un chapeau haut de forme est sur
Une table chargée de fruits
Les gants sont morts près d'une pomme
Une dame se tord le cou
Auprès d'un monsieur qui s'avale"

If the first two lines present a picture which is that of an ordinary still-life composition, then the third line transforms this in a rather sinister manner, but the last two lines can have nothing sinister about them because they are too ridiculous. Thus the total effect of the verse is complete denial of the rational world which we know -why should one not describe gloves which are simply lying on the table as dead, after all, they could well resemble a pair of dead hands. But of course, Apollinaire does not offer us this comparison as it would reduce the shock value of his image. And once one has conceded this possibility then

(1) It is also possibly a symbol of this kind of poetry. Cf. "~~Arbre~~ Arbre" and our analysis in section 3 of this chapter.

(2) O.P. p. 1080

it is only one step further to finding the next two lines normal. Thus the complete reversal of rational experience of the world that takes place in these lines, while it is meant to shock and surprise us, otherwise it would have no effect upon us, is not simply a gratuitous attempt to play on the reader's susceptibility to the irrational; it is a deliberate presentation of an order of experience, which might be said to be that of dreams, which is that of the unrestricted imagination that the poet desires and which is offered to us at this climatic point in the poem so that we may understand that the poet considers it to be part of our normal experience of the world which we have hitherto chosen to ignore or to dismiss without considering its significance. The relation that this bears to the future and to the possibility of our having knowledge of the future as the poet proclaimed in the last verse but one - "Et vous connaîtrez l'avenir" - is that future is the time of the imagination, and therefore by releasing the blocks which have been erected against the imaginative interpretation of the world we are projecting ourselves into the future.

As we have indicated at various points in this study, Apollinaire was deeply aware of the movement of social history which was carrying twentieth century man to a new area of experience and this is his response to that movement, to the Zeitgeist of the age which had begun to explore new areas of all sciences with such startling results as the aeroplane. We have also already pointed out the significance of the Icarus image, namely that it was for Apollinaire the proof that the imagination had

seized the idea of flight long before science had risen to the invention of the vehicle, and therefore the imagination must hold the clues to many more tangible aspects of future scientific and social development. But the important thing is that Apollinaire believed that man had come to a specific historical moment when his development would accelerate, when machines for which no imaginative prototype existed would come into being - "attendez-vous/ A des milliards de prodiges/ Qui n'ont fait naître aucune fable/ Nul ne les ayant imaginés" - and that thus the age of the imagination, of the subconscious mind had come at a time when most people were held in the strait-jacket of a strictly "realistic" interpretation of the world and their experience of it. One has only to consider such a minor aspect of Apollinaire's writing as his book reviews to see how often he spoke out loudly against "realist" writers such as Zola, and called for a literature of the imagination to replace the drab imitation of everyday life that these writers purveyed. Nor can one say, in the light of "Les Collines", that this was a plea for escapist literature. It was, and is, a demand that we should allow our imaginations to play their full part in our experience of the world.

Clearly the verse, the still-life, which we have been analysing is intended to provoke - to be surprising and violent on that level, so that those who believe that art should be the imitation of nature in the most slavish sense would be presented with an ⁱⁿescapable experience. But the surprise of this image also functions on a different level for those, especially those

readers who today are much more accustomed to unreal and surreal art, to whom the imagination was fundamentally important; for we may still react to this vision as an unreal vision which puts a literal interpretation of a humorous kind upon the French phrase "une nature morte". Nature must indeed be dead when inanimate objects such as gloves have died; and human nature too when people turn on themselves in this manner - we cannot at all take the two last lines as real suicides - and so we are in the realm of the imagination.

Of the next verse Scott Bates has said -

"Il rapporte le feu divin à la vie avec la confiance en soi-même d'un Prométhée dans un avion, d'un Rimbaud, père lui-aussi de l'esprit nouveau (1).

- but it seems to us that he has overlooked the obvious message of this verse (to which we have already referred in the beginning of Chapter one). Let us examine it closely -

"Le bal tournoie au fond du temps
J'ai tué le beau chef d'orchestre
Et je pèle pour mes amis
L'orange dont la saveur est
Un merveilleux feu d'artifice"

The first two lines recall the emphatic lines from "La Jolie Rousse" concerning the power which the poet felt himself, as one who was aware of his imagination, to have over time -

"Il y a aussi le temps qu'on peut chasser ou faire revenir"

- but here there is a difference that is really only a difference

(1) Scott Bates op.cit. p.32

of expression. The orchestra that is playing, the dance that is going on "Au fond du temps" are clearly time itself which must necessarily lose all coherence and regularity with the death of the conductor, who, significantly is described as "beau". (As the dead woman is "belle".) The point that the poet is making is that the poetry which he is writing is free from the limitations of time because it is the poetry of the imagination, which is also different from the old-fashioned ideas of beauty as he has already ~~de~~ informed us. Time is just one more reality which no longer operates in the field of the imagination. Thus these lines are essentially concerned with the poet's role, in particular in writing these lines, but also in general.

Thus also, the following lines are concerned with exactly the same thing, and the orange which the poet is peeling is the imagery of his poem, the fruit of the imagination. We have already seen the prominence and the significance of the images of the orange and of the firework for Apollinaire ("La girande tourne ô belle ô belle nuit") and here he compresses both these aspects into one image which is a perfect illustration of both, since the sudden explosive quality of the firework is caught by the transformation of the orange to firework and the visual quality, the striking colour and shape of the orange are echoed in the image of the firework. Should any doubt persist as to the meaning of this verse with regard to Apollinaire's own poetry, one has only to point further to the re-introduction of the poet's self - "Et je pèle ..." - which joins with the introductory verse to the sequence

that was discussed above.

The next verse returns to the kind of tableau that the preceding verse offered the reader. It begins with a statement which immediately rules out any realistic significance -

"Tous sont morts le maître d'hôtel

Leur verre un champagne irréel"

The poet even allows himself to use the adjective unreal referring to something which is completely real and normal - champagne - so that every aspect of the image shall be divorced from reality. The next lines also become a comment upon this kind of writing while remaining part of this strange picture which the poet is painting for us -

"Qui mousse comme un escargot

Ou comme un cerveau de poète

Tandis que chantait une rose"

Clearly the images which we are offered are the froth of the poet's imagination. The line which offers us this comparison is the only one which would not really fit into a visual representation of this image, which is a kind of surrealist painting - surrealist, that is, in the Apollinarian sense and in the sense in which he applied it (since it is synonymous with "surréaliste") to the painting of Chagall. (1)

- (1) We have been unable to trace exactly which pictures by Chagall this sequence is supposed to relate to, but it is obvious that there is rather more than a general similarity of style in as far as this is possible between painting and poetry. Consider, for example, Chagall's tendency to portray an object in a more or less realistic fashion (apart from his choice of colour) except for a detail which is completely unreal e.g. the self portrait with an upside-down head or the self portrait with seven fingers.

From this we go on to imagery which cannot be ascribed to the influence of anyone at all, except the earlier poetry of Apollinaire himself; imagery of a kind which goes beyond the purely visual -

"L'esclave tient une épée nue
 Semblable aux sources et aux fleuves
 Et chaque fois qu'elle s'abaisse
 Un univers est éventré
 Dont il sort des mondes nouveaux"

The comparison of the sword to springs and rivers recalls the image of "Onirocritique" in which the two things were completely mixed up, but here it is the destructive aspect of the sword that emerges most strongly although we cannot escape the suggestion that its action is intended to slake a thirst in the manner that a running stream does; there are also phallic associations which are often found in Apollinaire's poetry when swords are mentioned, e.g. "les Sept épées". And that thirst must be precisely the thirst for new things, complete new worlds which are afforded us by the disembowelling of the old ones - in other and much less poetic words by a complete and radical re-ordering of our interpretations of experience. One wonders whether the use of the image of a slave might not indicate an awareness on the poet's part that he was all but obsessed with the new. Perhaps it is not necessary to look as deeply as that for an explanation, it may be that Apollinaire simply wished to stress how much control we could have over our imagination if we wanted - control, that is, of a non-restrictive kind.

This would certainly seem to be the implications of the next verse in which the idea is expressed in terms of a chauffeur driving a car round corners -

"Le chauffeur se tient au volant
Et chaque fois que sur la route
Il corne en passant le tourhant
Il paraît à perte de vue
Un univers encore vierge"

- one must also note that Apollinaire does not overlook the detail which serves his case - in this instance the blowing of the horn, which serves as a reminder of the noisy kind of poetry which he so often uses, the exuberance of his style.

In each case one notes the suddenness with which the new world appears, although the second image does not possess the violence of the former. One sees also a pattern of alternate verses here in which one verse is concerned with the process of what the poet is doing, and the next is a demonstration, as it were, of something completely unreal; but this pattern is interrupted by the second of these two stanzas both of which are concerned with the effects of the freeing of the imagination and of this kind of poetry. This second stanza is then followed by one which to a certain extent combines the qualities of the two -

"Et le tiers nombre c'est la dame
Elle monte dans l'ascenseur
Elle monte monte toujours
Et la lumière se déploie
Et ces clartés la transfigurent"

The first line of this verse suggests that the poet is establishing some kind of magic trinity with the persons of the slave, the chauffeur and the woman whom he now introduces, but the manner in which she is introduced suggests that she may well be the woman already referred to, the "femme belle et vermeille" whose dead body lay in the ship. Or perhaps she is simply the figure of the woman who is always present in Apollinaire's poetry. Wherever she comes from, she is transformed into a semi-mystical figure by the lift - an image which recalls the description of Christ ascending to heaven as an attempt on the world altitude record, as here there is something very moving about the woman's ascent to the light, even though she is carried in a lift and not by clouds or angels. (The next poem in this section of the volume is "Arbre" which also uses the image of the lift, and it must be remembered that Apollinaire chose to put "Les Collines" here - outside its chronological position.)

If the woman is the same one as was found on the ship, that is to say the symbol of the old ideas of beauty, then we could interpret the image in this fashion - the old ideas of beauty are transformed by the light which is clearly the light of knowledge akin to the fire which has purified the poet, but the most important thing is that she is raised up to the light by a lift - an artefact of the modern age - thus it is the twentieth century acting upon the woman that renders her susceptible of transformation.

The next verse now puts an end to these glimpses of the worlds of the imagination which the poet has afforded us.

All that he has revealed to us he claims is only of a minor importance, and clearly this is true; his imagery has been calculated to prove to us that the imagination can transform reality and this it has done, but all this would mean nothing if the poet did not intend us to learn from his poem and to look differently henceforth at the world around us -

"Mais ce sont de petits secrets
 Il en est d'autres plus profonds
 Qui se dévoileront bientôt
 Et feront de vous cent morceaux
 A la pensée toujours unique"

-and the importance of this effect upon us, the effect, that is to say, of the work of our own imaginations, is fully brought out in these lines/. Only really in becoming "cent morceaux" can we remain something "A la pensée toujours unique" - because we can only be true to ourselves if we reveal as many aspects of our personalities as possible. This is what Apollinaire has always tried to do, and this is what he does in the next verse by including in the climax of his poem the darker side of his nature, his more mournful characteristics, at a moment when one expects nothing but triumph. And so once more Apollinaire surprises us, but he does so simply by being himself, the surprise and violence of his poetry spring from his own nature -

"Mais pleure pleure et repleurons
 Et soit que la lune soit pleine
 Ou soit qu'elle n'ait qu'un croissant
 Ah! pleure pleure et repleurons
 Nous avons tant ri au soleil"

All the doubts which "Les Fiançailles" and "Le Brasier" expressed concerning essentially the same experience are now expressed here, but they are assimilated to the poet's own character in such a way that we realise that he has mastered them even though he could never dispel them entirely. Also the lift/death symbolism here indicates acceptance of a degree of failure. We find this movement exactly paralleled in "La Jolie Rousse" as after the verses which prolong the ephemeral into the eternal, the poem's moment of triumph, the poet then exclaims -

"Mais riez riez de moi

Hommes de partout surtout ~~des~~ gens d'ici

Car il y'a tant de choses que je n'ose vous dire

Tant de choses que vous ne me laisseriez pas dire

Ayez pitié de moi"

This is the essential poetic predicament -one can never say everything, not only because of one's own limitations or inhibitions, but also because of those of the reader. Thus we feel that there is one more reason here for putting "Toujours" at the beginning of the attitudes towards self and poetry which led Apollinaire to compose the poems discussed in this section of the present study.

"Toujours

Nous irons plus loin sans avancer jamais"

But "Les Collines" reverses the order of "La Jolie Rousse", which is in keeping with that poem's more exuberant and declamatory tone, so that the admission of the permanence of doubt and a degree of failure is followed by the injunction which has been

the core of the poem -

"Des bras d'or supportent la vie
Pénétrez le secret doré
Tout n'est qu'une flamme rapide
Que fleurit la rose adorable
Et d'où monte un parfum exquis"

Clearly the heart of the poet's attitude to life lies in his new-found ability to accept that "Tout n'est qu'une flamme rapide" and not in any conversation to a belief in any other life than that which is bound by this limitation. The temptations to look for consolation in religion which were so present and powerful in "Zone" are totally absent from these poems. The images of ascension here call no Christ to the poem. The point from which both "La Jolie Rousse" and "Les Collines" start is acceptance of life. And for Apollinaire this meant acceptance of the fact that nothing lasts, nothing remains stable, as the image of the final verse in which flame becomes rose becomes perfume, demonstrates; thus in these conditions Apollinaire roots his poetry - one image changes to another without regard for logic or "bienséance". And thus only when we have accustomed ourselves to looking at life in this way, when we have accepted our imagination's interpretation of a scene as equally valid with respect to our learnedⁿ response to that scene, then we will have penetrated the secret of life.

The closeness in time of "La Jolie Rousse" and "Les Collines" should no longer be in any doubt. It seems to us that it is also clear that the poems of "Calligrammes" are indeed different

from the pre-war poems of the volume - that is to say those which seek an objective status - but that the techniques of violence, to whatever end they are put, are present in almost every poem in the volume.

CHAPTER THREE : SECTION ELEVEN

APPENDIX: THE CALLIGRAMMES

For the most part, the calligrammes are outside the scope of this present study but there are however one or two points which we wish to make. One of the most interesting aspects of the calligrammes which Apollinaire wrote is that the first ones are much more daring, more radically experimental than the later ones. Consider, for example, "Lettre-Océan" (1) or "Voyage" (2) where the eye encounters a completely exploded form on the page. One begins where one pleases and links any segment to any other as the poet has eschewed all normal form, although he has imitated the shape of the Eiffel tower, seen from above, in the former, and the long shape of a train being drawn by a locomotive emitting a puff of smoke in the latter. Significantly, both these calligrammes belong to the year 1914, which is the time of intense experiment in Apollinaire's work that led to poems such as "Les Fenêtres", "Lundi Rue Christine", "Arbre" etc. - all written between the time of publication of "Alcools" and the outbreak of the war. It is true that also during this period Apollinaire published much less daring calligrammes, in the sense that their form is the outline of an object, such as "Coeur Couronne et Miroir"; but the total explosion of form that he sought in "Lettre-Océan" and in "Voyage" is never again achieved with such success, although one might argue that some of the restless forms of the poems in

(1) O.P. p. 183

(2) O.P. p. 198

"Case d'Armons" come close to it.

Apart from the fact that the existence of the calligrammes is yet another indication of the wide range of experiment that exist in Apollinaire's poetry during this period, one might also argue that his desire to give the poem a form which would communicate something immediately to the eye of the reader, is part and parcel of his aesthetic of surprise: as one turns the pages of "Calligrammes" one is faced with the sudden apparition of shapes, sometimes representing things, sometimes not, which communicate to us an immediate impression in the same way that an object does - for example: "La Colombe Poignardée et le jet d'eau" (1). In this particular example the image of the dove is introduced into the reader's mind, before even he has read the title. The importance of this fact should not be underestimated, as the image of the dove is crucial to the poem, and apart from the title, there is no mention of the word dove until the last line of the poem -

MAIS
près d'un
jet d'eau qui
pleure et qui prie
cette colombe s'extasie

Our argument is that in doing this kind of thing, Apollinaire was attempting to give to his imagery the force and the substance which he elsewhere sought to give to it by the techniques of violence. The fact that he should have written the calligramme

(1) O.P. p. 213

at all after having developed these considerable techniques is evidence of his continuing thirst for the new.

For Marcel Adéma (1), this progression from the near total disintegration of form of "Lettre-Océan" to the poem image of "Coeur Couronne et Miroir" was accompanied by a certain disillusionment on Apollinaire's part after Delaunay had taken the side of Barzun in a quarrel over the use of the word "Simultanisme" (as well as giving primacy to Cendrars as the inventor of the simultanist poem). It seems likely to us that this, allied to Apollinaire's constant determination never to allow himself to be classed ^{with} ~~for~~ any group or school, is sufficient reason to advance for Apollinaire's failure to exploit fully this new form.

(1) Adema (68) pp. 240-243

CHAPTER FOUR : CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions which we have to draw from this study of violence as a technique in Apollinaire's poetry are conclusions which will affect several aspects of the state of Apollinaire studies as they stand at present. Firstly, it has been demonstrated that a fairly clear, if at times inconsistent, line of development has been drawn. A line which links "L'Emigrant de Landor Road" to "Les Collines", but a line which may also be extended further back into Apollinaire's past, in fact to his first poems, and a line which, we may surmise, might have been projected into the future, for whatever paths Apollinaire chose to follow, it is clear that for him surprise (and as we have shown violence) were always part of his poetry.

Apollinaire was often accused of inconsistency, of "mystification"; it is to be hoped that the present study has gone some way towards justifying Apollinaire's many changes of direction, by presenting a demonstration of just how consistent in his experiments the poet could be. It must also be inferred from what we have developed in the course of this study that between 1903, when "La Chanson du mal-aimé" was completed and 1907 when Apollinaire embarked upon the phase of his career which was to see the creation of "Le Brasier" and "Les Fiançailles", Apollinaire came to realise fully the possibilities of those aspects of his style which we have called techniques of violence, and that from that moment onward he began to develop these aspects consciously until he had elaborated what one might clearly call a complete aesthetic of violence.

The public scandal, the often bitter opposition which accompanied his career may be taken as circumstantial evidence of the success with which he assaulted the aesthetic and poetic preconceptions and prejudices of his time.

It is clear from all the poems that we have studied that if there is a degree of consistency in Apollinaire's search for violence and surprise, then it is almost impossible to set out methodically and consistently the ways in which he tried to achieve them, which in itself is one of the poet's sources of surprise. If one compares a poem such as "Zone" with a poem such as "Cours de Chasse", how apparent, at first, seem the differences between them. But, we would submit, it has been demonstrated that behind these two poems lie the same aesthetic intentions, the same attitude to the relationship which exists between poem and reader. This brings us to one of the most important points which we have to make in concluding our study namely that throughout his career Apollinaire was supremely aware of the fact that a poem is written to be read by someone other than its author. Much that Apollinaire put into his poems he put in with the intention of eliciting a certain reaction from his reader. (In support of this statement one may adduce the evidence of Apollinaire's frequent disguising of details concerning his intimate and personal life, which he included in his poetry - Mme. Durrty has commented at some length upon this procedure in her book (1) and so we shall go no further in this matter here.)

(1) Durrty "Guillaume Apollinaire -Alcools " 3 vols.; vol2 pp.106 et seq.

If this statement seems obvious, then let us elaborate it by saying that the poet was conscious of the virginal quality of mind which is that of the reader who is faced with the completely new. This quality is one which we associate particularly with children, without experience of the world, and it seems to us that it would be a perfect illustration of our argument if we were to consider the poem "Le Voyageur" and the view of human experience which this presents to us (1). Not only does this poem have its roots in Apollinaire's many journeys undertaken as a child and as ^ayouth, it also presents a fragmented view of human experience which is almost a philosophy developed from the child's disconnected view of the world. Where it is important for us to distinguish between the two points of view is in the degree of innocence with which the child faces the new world and that with which the reader faces the new poem. Clearly the latter is somewhat less (if one may make a quantitative distinction) than the former, and for this reason in particular it must have appeared necessary to Apollinaire to endow his imagery with a quality of surprise, with the necessary force to take the reader aback, so that he would be stopped in his tracks and forced to come to terms with the poem as an object, as something separate from his own experience of the world and his own judgements. In other words, Apollinaire sought to recreate Man's vision of the world.

It is now important that we should try to assess the total success or failure of Apollinaire's work with regard to just

(1) O.P. p.78 and also Chapter two section five

this Promethean task. To the image of the Prometheus Apollinaire might well have preferred that of Icarus, which as we have seen recurs frequently in his poetry. This comparison is not an idle one, for, we believe, it holds the clue to Apollinaire's own vision of his role and of his assessment of his success. Icarus as we all know died because he flew too close to the sun, but before he died he had achieved something that Man has always dreamed of - he had flown, thus achieving a completely new experience. This search for the new, this desire to enlarge the realms of human experience is what seems to us to be the motor force behind Apollinaire's poetry, rather than the Promethean desire to steal the sacred fire which might be the key to life. Apollinaire's poetry does not aspire to an explanation of the mysteries of life; Apollinaire has no equivalent of Baudelaire's "Correspondances"; both of which are to say that Apollinaire's poetry was basically anti-symbolist in its nature, whatever technical and formal debts he may have to the symbolists. Thus for Apollinaire the poem was a flight, the appearance¹² of a locomotive, which meant that it might, with the passage of time, lose all that made it exciting and different -

"O mon amie hâte-toi

Crains qu'un jour un train ne t'émeuve

Plus" (1)

However, more than fifty years after his death, his poems are still capable of surprising and shocking their readers, of

(1) O.P. p. 310

opening new horizons to their imaginations, and perhaps that is sufficient a period of time to have elapsed for us to be able to say that he was able to endow his poems with a pristine quality that is as near eternal as poetry can hope to be.

In only very few of the poems we have analysed, has it been necessary to point to what the poet intended to be a surprise effect - they are nearly always self evident .

It follows from what we have just said, and from our entire study, that Apollinaire did not see the role of the poet as an ethical one, except within the confines of his role as an enlarger of human experience, as a stimulator of the imagination.

If, toward the end of "Les Collines" Apollinaire seems to be saying that he has revealed certain of life's secrets (which would imply that the poet has a spiritual mission) -

Mais ce sont de petits secrets

Il en est d'autres plus profonds

Qui se dévoileront bientôt

Et feront de vous cent morceaux

A la pensée toujours unique" (1)

-this must be understood in terms of Man's continual and patent progress in the fields of scientific and self-discovery, which one might, in order to illustrate Apollinaire's conception of this process, compared to the compression of gas within a cylinder, the unknown part becoming smaller and smaller, but never disappearing entirely. Thus the secrets which Apollinaire claimed to have revealed, and those which he hinted might soon be revealed, were not for him the secret .

(1) O.P. p. 177

As the final verse of "Les Collines" makes clear, the only secret of life, the "golden secret" was an understanding of the ephemeral nature of the universe which could lead to a heightened sensitivity to one's experience -

"Des bras d'or supportent la vie
Pénétrez le secret doré
Tout n'est qu'une flamme rapide
Que fleurit la rose adorable
Et d'où monte un parfum exquis"

Thus one must conclude that Apollinaire's conception of the poet's role was not an ethical one, but rather one to which ethical considerations were largely irrelevant, as were matters of good and bad taste, except where what was considered to be in bad taste might serve to shock the reader.

The analysis of Apollinaire's war poetry which is included in chapter three of the present study is as good an illustration of this conception of the poet's role as we could hope to cite in support of this conclusion, for if this war poetry has shocked such critics as Mme. Durrty, then it is because they have failed to understand this fundamental aspect of the poet's attitude to life - an attitude which has its simple and naïve rather than distasteful manifestations in the poet's obscene and scurrilous writings but which has its more profound consequences revealed in that war poetry and in the poet's understanding of the importance which the Marquis de Sade would have for the twentieth century mind. There is also the fact which is not (or at least after the analysis we have given, so we hope) to be disputed any longer that the poems of the war years are an attempt

to cope with a personal experience of the war and not simply a new decor for the old themes and forms of Apollinaire's poetry. Without wishing to press the comparison too far, one might suggest a certain similarity of attitude on the part of Apollinaire and Gide. Both men were aware of the necessity of the acceptance of new experience to the development of the personality, although it is immediately necessary to say that Apollinaire laid nothing like the stress which Gide did, upon the moral imperative of not allowing oneself to be held prisoner by one's environment and an inherited morality. Moreover, Apollinaire was more given to expressing the regret he felt for time past than was Gide.

Nonetheless, the image of the enchanter, which is to be found throughout Apollinaire's work, this central image which he assumed for himself when he took the device "j'émervaille", is the image of one who is beyond normal considerations of good and evil. The poet-magician reveals to us his myriad creatures, which live only for a second before our eyes and then disappear to be replaced by others. Such a concept of the poet's role does not admit of judgements of good or bad.

There is no part of Apollinaire's work, either his poetry or his prose, which questions the value of the new. Many poems may be a lament for what is passed and no longer attainable except through the uncertain grasp of memory, but that is another thing. In this we may see the naivety of a man who lived at the beginning of the twentieth century, and who although he saw the beginnings of the destructive possibilities of the machine

(tanks, bombs etc.) was still far enough away from the age in which man has to some extent become afraid of his machines, to be more fascinated by the energy of machines, than he was frightened of their impersonality. The locomotive, the motor car, the aeroplane were for Apollinaire new things; things which had appeared and would change the world, and which in their turn would also disappear, replaced by still newer things. He does not question the transformations of our civilisation which are brought about by these machines - perhaps one could not expect him to foresee cities choked with traffic, or cities destroyed by saturation bombing- but even if one could, one cannot risk saying that such sights would have elicited from him a questioning of the direction of scientific development.

In such an attitude one cannot simply see the philosophy of "le beau nouveau". For Apollinaire, what was new, was important not necessarily for its duty or its energy, it was important above all because it was surprising. One turns a corner, and one sees something that has never been seen before -

"Le chauffeur se tient au volant
 Et chaque fois que sur la route
 Il corne en passant le tournant
 Il paraît à perte de vue
 Un univers encore vierge" (1)

This is the spirit which informs Apollinaire's poetry, this is the force which creates his imagery, this is what we have defined as violence, not simply because it is fashionable at this particular time to apply the term violence to anything and everything,

(1) O.P. p. 177

but because it is a view of human nature and human experience which can really be described in no other way. Clearly, for Apollinaire, the human soul, the human mind, are acted upon by the universe; they are subjected to a series of events^e; they are the victims of violence. And for Apollinaire the secret of life was to accept this violence and to allow, indeed to stimulate, one's imagination to act upon the world in the same way. The imagination, and in particular the poetic imagination, may re-order the individual's experience of the world according to no laws, without seeking to impose a spurious order, and may thus act in harmony with the universe which knows no harmony of its own.

It may be that in this consideration we may find the answer, or at least the suggestion of an answer, to the problem of the construction of "Alcools". Several critics, among them Mme. Durry, have attempted to analyse the order of appearance within the volume of the poems of "Alcools" ; and Mme. Durry has pointed out that there is a pattern of alternation of long and short poems, if one excludes the two groups of poems entitled "Rhéna-nes" and "A la Santé", but this does not explain why Apollinaire chose to put his first long poems "Merlin et la Vieille Femme", "L'Ermite" and "Le Larron" in the middle of his collection instead of at the beginning, or why he chose to put "Zone" at the beginning. On the basis of the present study of Apollinaire's poetry and attitudes we might suggest that the principle which lies behind the construction of "Alcools" is that of simultaneity.

The poet, being unable to present to the reader all his poems at once, has chosen to order them in such a way that the reader is forced to pass from his present to his past and vice versa, even, perhaps, from his future to his past, since "Zone" stands at the beginning of the volume as the most recently composed poem of all, and as such, an indication of the future development of the poet's style.

If, therefore, there is a word which one may take from art criticism and apply to "Alcools", that word is not Cubism, but Simultanism. However, as always with Apollinaire, one must be careful to specify that the term must be understood as the poet himself understood it, and not necessarily as Delaunay would have defined it, or as others would have applied it to Delaunay's painting.

Through the construction of "Alcools" Apollinaire makes every poem a new poem, a surprising poem, since the style and subject of what one has read, are no preparation for the poems that one is about to read, even when one is faced (as is the case with the first three ^epoems) with several consecutive poems on the same theme.

This process of renewal through the work of the imagination which is present in the arrangement of "Alcools" is also present throughout much of Apollinaire's poetry. And it is this which certain critics as Marguerite Bonnet (1) have failed to appreciate. Consider the following paragraph from her study "Aux Sources du Surréalisme" -

(1) "Aux Sources du Surréalisme" R.L.M. nos 104-107

"Apollinaire a donc posé quelques jalons sur le chemin à parcourir. Mais si son oeuvre le montre souvent merveilleusement sensible au lyrisme épars dans la vie, il ne s'est pas avancé très loin, il n'est pas allé jusqu'à mettre en question par la poésie l'existence même. Or très tôt, c'est tout ce qui importe aux futurs surréalistes. Dès 1922, Breton déclare : ' La Poésie n'aurait pour moi aucun intérêt si je ne m'attendais pas à ce qu'elle suggère à quelques-uns de mes amis et à moi-même une solution particulière du problème de notre vie.' A ses yeux, seule l'attitude de l'homme devant la vie, c'est-à-dire 'la manière dont il semble avoir accepté l'inacceptable condition humaine', donne à l'oeuvre son vrai sens. Il est bien certain qu'Apollinaire reste étranger à de telles conceptions; la poésie est pour lui l'expression de la vie, non la promesse de sa transformation, le lieu d'un appel bouleversant et insaisissable. Il cherche de nouveaux domaines pour l'art, non un élargissement de la connaissance; il ambitionne une expression plus totale du réel, non son aggrandissement, alors que les surréalistes transformeront la notion même du réel, en y faisant entrer 'Tout ce qu'il peut contenir d'irrationnel jusqu'à nouvel ordre', aussi bien que les virtualités de l'imaginaire.

Ainsi s'explique que, malgré la permanence de l'admiration des poètes surréalistes pour Apollinaire, malgré l'importance qu'ils attribuent à son oeuvre et l'ampleur de l'influence qu'il a exercée sur eux, son patronage n'ait pas été revendiqué comme celui d'un Rimbaud ou d'un Lautréamont. C'est que les problèmes ont changé de nature; ils ont glissé du plan de l'art à celui de la vie." (1)

(1) pp. 71-72

No one would dispute with Miss Bonnet that Apollinaire was seeking new domains for art; nor that he was equally attempting a more total expression of reality, but it is precisely by attempting to express the indissoluble links between the real and the imaginary, by attempting to add to the experience of life the experience of the imagination that Apollinaire was attempting to reach these goals. To say that the imagination and its relationship to life in Apollinaire's work are not of absolutely primal importance is to ignore the finest poetry that he wrote, ~~not to say the one consistent aspect of the poetry that he wrote,~~ not to say the one consistent aspect of the poetry that he wrote after 1907. Consider the following passage from "Les Fiançailles" -

"J'observe le repos du dimanche

Et je loue la paresse

Comment comment réduire

L'infiniment petite science

Que m'imposent mes sens " (1)

How can one fail to see in the repetition of the cry "comment" the depths of the poet's desire to escape from the inadequate world of the experience of the senses? Yet he is aware that the imagination can never wholly be free from the mind's record of the body's sensual experience. It may be true that in this he falls short of the blind courage of the surrealists' attempt to accept the "inacceptable condition humaine", but this does not in any way invalidate his plea for the renewal of life through the imagination; this is not to say, as Miss Bonnet rashly does, that he was not attempting to enlarge the domain of the real -

(1) O.P. p.133

- for this is precisely what he was doing in "Les Fiançailles" and in most of his important poems which followed.

It is not possible, once one has read the poem "Les Collines", to remain unaware of the degree to which Apollinaire realised that life would be transformed by the liberation of the imagination; and if this poem should end with the injunction to penetrate the secret of life, which is to accept the transience of all things while still longing for their eternal prolongation, then what is this other than Apollinaire's ~~an~~ acceptance of the unacceptable?

As to the accusations that Apollinaire's imagination fell short of the goal which he set it, these pose a much more debatable problem. In the second part of his study of "Calligrammes", S.I. Lockerie comes to a conclusion which we would submit is supported by all that we have advanced in this study, namely -

" . . . si par fantaisie il faut entendre cette invention de libre allure dont nous venons de parler, c'est l'évidence des écrits théoriques qu'Apollinaire n'aurait pas complètement récusé le terme , et on pourrait sans inconvénient l'adopter pour bien des pièces de "Calligrammes". Mais, comme nous avons dit dans la première partie de cette étude, la poésie d'invention dynamique n'est pas le seul courant poétique du recueil. Un autre courant, de poésie plus introspective, ne cesse de passer en filigrane à travers le volume, et, après 1916 à peu près, se montre plus fort que le premier." (1)

(1) R.L.M. nos 166-169 p. 87

The term fantasy is adequate when applied to poems such as "Un Fantôme de Nuées" (1), but it is certainly not so, when applied to poems such as "La Victoire", "Les Collines" and most of the other major pieces written after 1916. In these poems Apollinaire has attempted to find, through the imagination, a vision of life, of the universe that is as boundless as all that is new can make it.

Often the transformations which objects and images undergo in Apollinaire's poems are fantastic -

"Un coq chante je rêve et les feuillards agitent

Leurs feuilles qui ressemblent à de pauvres marins" (1)

-but they are not restricted to this role of the wave of the magician's^s wand for the delight of his audience. As we have tried to show throughout this study, for Apollinaire, violence and surprise were means of endowing his imagery with a reality of its own, a reality which would impress itself on the mind of the reader and not allow him to disregard it. To dismiss this as the simple play of the poet's fantasy is to misunderstand all that he was trying to do. Thus the last words of "Calligrammes" reflect the poet's intention to communicate through his poetry -

"Mais riez riez de moi

Hommes de partout surtout gens d'ici

Car il y a tant de choses que je n'ose vous dire

Tant de choses que vous ne me laisseriez pas dire

Ayez pitié de moi"

- which cannot allow us to dismiss Apollinaire as a simple entertainer.

(1) O.P. p. 309

The body of work concerning the poetry of Guillaume Apollinaire grows ~~and grows~~ larger every day, and there are many aspects of that poetry which we have been unable to discuss within the scope of the present study. Nonetheless, it seems to us that the definition of violence in Apollinaire's poetry and the study of the poet's evolution in respect of this technique, is something which is central to any discussion of his work; and we would submit that we have herein accomplished such a study.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

SECTION ONE: WORKS PUBLISHED DURING APOLLINAIRE'S LIFETIME

L'Enchanteur pourrissant (gravures sur bois par André Derain)

Paris, 1909, Kahnweiler, s.d.

L'Hérésiaque et cie, Paris, 1910, Stock

Le Bestiaire ou Cortège d'Orphée (gravures sur bois par Raoul Dufy)

Paris, 1911, Deplanche.

Les Peintes Cubistes, Méditations Esthétiques, Paris, 1913, Figuières.

Alcools, Paris, 1913, Mercure de France.

Le Poète Assassiné, Paris, 1916, L'Édition.

Vitam Impendere Amori, Paris, 1917, Mercure de France .

Les Mamelles de Tirésias, Paris, 1918, Éditions Sic.

Calligrammes, Paris, 1918, Mercure de France .

Le Flâneur des Deux Rives , Paris, 1918, Éditions de la Sirène.

SECTION TWO: WORKS PUBLISHED POSTHUMOUSLY

La Femme Assise, Paris, 1920, Gallimard.

IL Y A , Paris, 1925, Messein.

Anecdotes, Paris, 1926, Stock.

Les Épingles, Paris, 1928, Éditions des Cahiers Libres.

Ombre de Mon Amour, Genève, 1947, Pierre Cailler.

Lettres à sa Marraine, Paris, 1948, Pour Les Fils du Roi.

Couleur du temps, Paris, 1949, Editions du Belier.
 Tendre comme le Souvenir, Paris, 1952, Gallimard.
 Casanova, Paris, 1952, Gallimard.
 Le Gueux Mélancolique, Paris, 1952, Gallimard.
 Œuvres Poétiques, Paris, 1956, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade.
 Chroniques d'Art, Paris, 1961, Gallimard.
 Les Diables Amoureux, Paris, 1964, Gallimard.
 Oeuvres Complètes, Paris, 1965, 4 volumes, André Balland et Jacques Legat.

SECTION THREE: PRINCIPAL WORKS CONCERNING APOLLINAIRE'S LIFE AND WORKS

Adéma, Pierre Marcel: Guillaume Apollinaire Le Mal-Aimé, Paris, 1952, Plon
 Aegerter & Labracherie: Guillaume Apollinaire, Paris, 1943, Julliard.
 Billy, André: Apollinaire vivant, Paris, 1923, La Sirène.
 Poètes d'Aujourd'hui, Guillaume Apollinaire, Paris, 1947, Seghers.
 Avec Apollinaire, Paris, 1966, La Palatine.
 Breton, André: Les Pas Perdus, Paris, 1924, N.R.F.
 Bonnefoy, Claude: Apollinaire, Paris, 1969, Classiques du XX^e siècle.
 Cadou, René-Guy: Testament d'Apollinaire, Paris, 1945, Debresse.
 Carmody, Francis J: The Evolution of Apollinaire's Poetics 1901-1914, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1963, University of California Press.
 Cendrars, Blaise: Blaise Cendrars vous parle, Paris, 1956, Denoël

- Chevalier, Jean-Claude : "Alcools" d'Apollinaire -essai d'analyse
des formes poétiques, Paris,1970;Minard
(Bibliothèque des lettres modernes no 17)
- Couffignal, Robert : L'inspiration biblique dans l'Oeuvre d'Apollinaire, Paris,1966, Bibliothèque des Lettres.
Apollinaire (Les Ecrivains devant Dieu),Paris,
1966, Desclée de Brouwer.
"Zone "d'Apollinaire (Archives Guillaume Apollinaire no 4) Paris,1970 Ed. Minard.
- Décaudin, Michel : Le Dossier d'Alcools, Genève,1960, Droz.
- Davies, Margaret : Apollinaire, London & Edinburgh 1964, Oliver
& Boyd.
- Durry, Marie-Jeanne : Guillaume Apollinaire : Alcools 3 vols. Paris,
1956 (vol 1)1964 (vols 2&3) Sedes.
- Fabureau, Hubert : Guillaume Apollinaire, Son Oeuvre, Paris, 1956
Nouvelle Revue Critique.
- Faure-Favier, L : Souvenirs sur Apollinaire, Paris,1945, Grasset.
- Flettweiss, Christian : Apollinaire en Ardenne, Brussels,1934, Henriques.
- Fleuret, Fernand : De Gilles de Rais à Guillaume Apollinaire, Paris,
1933, Mercure de France.
- Goffin, Robert : Entrer en Poésie, Brussels,1948, A l'Enseigne du
Chat qui Pêche.
- Jacob, Max : Correspondance vol.1. Paris,1958, Editions de Paris.
- Laurencin, Marie : Le Carnet des Nuits, Genève,1956, Cailler

- Léautaud, Paul : Entretiens avec Robert Mallet, Paris, 1951, Gallimard.
Journal littéraire Vols 2 & 3, Paris, 1955-56,
Mercure de France.
- Léonard, Emile : Guillaume Apollinaire, Souvenirs d'un Ami, Monaco,
1954, Editions du Rocher.
- Mackworth, Cecily : Guillaume Apollinaire and the Cubist life, London,
1961, John Murray.
- Monfort, Eugène : Apollinaire Travesti, Paris, 1948, Seghers.
- Morhange-Bégué, Claude : "La Chanson du Mal-Aimé" d'Apollinaire -
essai d'analyse structurale et stylistique,
Paris, 1970, Minard, (Bibliothèque des Lettres
Modernes, no 18)
- Moulin, Jeanine : Manuel poétique d'Apollinaire, Paris, 1938, Les
Cahiers du Journal des Poètes.
- Newman-Gordon, Pauline : Laforgue-Corbière-Apollinaire ou le Rire
en Pleurs, Paris, 1964, Debresse.
- Olivier, Fernande : Picasso et ses amis, Paris, 1933, Stock.
- Pia, Pascal : Apollinaire par lui-même, Paris, 1954, Seuil.
- Roques, Mario : Etudes de Littérature Française, Genève, 1949, Droz.
- Rouveyre, André : Souvenirs de Mon Commerce, Paris, 1921, Cres, 2,
Apollinaire Paris, 1945, N.R.F.
Apollinaire, Paris, 1952, Ed. Raison d'Etre.
Amour et poésie d'Apollinaire, Paris, 1955, Seuil.
- Salmon, André : Souvenirs sans Fin. Vols. 1, 2, 3. Paris, 1955-56,
Gallimard.

Soupault, Phillipe : Guillaume Apollinaire ou les Reflets de
l'incendie, Paris, 1926, Cahiers du Sud.

Steegmuller, Francis : Apollinaire Poet Among The Painters,
New York, 1963, Farrar, Strauss & Co,
London - Rupert Hart Davis.

Taupin, R. &

Zukofski, L. : Le Style d'Apollinaire, Paris, 1934, Les
Presses Modernes.

Vlaminck, Maurice de : Portraits avant décès, Paris, 1943,
Flammarion.

SECTION FOUR : OTHER WORKS OF INTEREST

Aegerther, Emmanuel &

Labracherie, Pierre : Au temps de Guillaume Apollinaire, Paris,
1946, Julliard.

Alberes, René-Marill : Bilan Littéraire du XX e siècle, Paris,
1956, Aubier.

Aragon, Louis : Chronique du Bel Canto, Genève, 1947, Skira.

Arbour, Romé : Les Revues Littéraires Ephémères Paraissant
à Paris entre 1900 et 1914 - Répertoire Des-
criptif, Paris, 1956, Corti.

Balakian, Anna : Literary origins of Surrealism, New York,
1946, King's Crown Press.

Berge, André : L'Esprit de la Littérature Contemporaine,
Paris, 1929, Plon.

- Billy, André : L'Epoque 1900, Paris, 1954, Tallandier.
L'Epoque Contemporaine, Paris, 1956, Tallandier.
- Bonneau, Georges : Le Symbolisme dans la poésie française contemporaine, Paris, 1930, Boivin.
- Clancier, G-E: Panorama Critique de Rimbaud au Surréalisme, Paris, 1953, Seghers.
- Clouard, Henri : La Poésie Française, Paris, 1924, Gauthier-Villars.
Histoire de la Littérature Française du Symbolisme à nos jours, Paris, 1947-49, Albin-Michel.
- Cornell, Kenneth : The Post-Symbolist Period, New Haven, 1958, Yale Univ. Press.
- Décaudin, Michel : La Crise des Valeurs Symbolistes, Toulouse, 1960, Edit. Privat.
- Derieux, Henri : La Poésie Française Contemporaine (1855- 1935) Paris, 1935, Mercure de France.
- Divoire, Fernand: Le Symbolisme -Son Influence Sur la Poésie d'Aujourd'hui, Paris, 1924.
- Fay, Bernard : Panorama de la Littérature Française Contemporaine, Paris, 1926, Kra.
- Fontainas, André : Dans la Lignée de Claudel, Paris, 1930, Nouvelle Revue Critique.
Tableau de la Poésie Française d'Aujourd'hui, Paris, 1931, Nouvelle Revue Critique.
- Fort, Paul & : Histoire de la Poésie Française depuis 1850,
Mandin, Louis Paris, 1927 Flammarion.

- Gossez, A-M. : Poésie du XX e siècle, Paris, 1935, Figuière.
- Gregh, Fernand : Portrait de la Poésie Moderne, de Rimbaud à Valéry, Paris, 1939, Delagrave.
- Groos, René &
- Truc, Gonzague : Les Lettres (Tableau du XX e siècle 1900 - 1933, no 4) Paris, 1934, Denël et Steele.
- Hauteceour, Louis : Peinture et Littérature en France, Paris, 1942; Colin.
- Henriot, Emile : De Lamartine à Valéry, Lyon, 1956, Lardanchet
Maîtres d'Hier et Contemporains, Paris, 1955, A. Michel.
- Kahnweiler, D. : Juan Gris, Paris, 1946, Gallimard.
- Lalou, René : Histoire de la Littérature Française Contemporaine, Paris, 1922, Cres.
- Lemaître, Georges : From Cubism to Surrealism in French Literature, Cambridge (Mass.) 1941, Harvard University Press.
- Lièvre, Pierre : Esquisses critiques 2 vols. Paris, 1921-26, Le Divan.
- Massis, Henri : Jugements, 2 vols. Paris, 1923, Plon.
- Montfort, Eugène : 25 ans de Littérature Française, 2 vols. Paris, 1927, Librairie de France.
- Porche, François : Poètes Français depuis Verlaine, Paris, 1924
Nouvelle Revue Critique.
- Raymond, Marcel : De Baudelaire au Surréalisme, Paris, 1953, Correa.

- Royère , Jean : Frontons, Paris,1932, Scheree.
- Senechal, Christian : Les Grands Courants de la Littérature
Française Contemporaine, Paris,1934,
Malfere.
- Shattuck, Roger : The Banquet Years, New York,1958, Harcourt
Brace & Co.
- Simon, P-H. : Histoire de la Littérature Française Contem-
poraine, Paris,1956, Armand Colin, 2 vols.
- Soupault, Philippe : Profils perdus, Paris, 1963, Merveure de France.

SECTION FIVE: PERIODICALS DEVOTED TO APOLLINAIRE

- Sic, Nos 37-39, January-February 1919.
- Vient de Paraître, No. 24. 15th November 1923.
- L'Esprit Nouveau, No. 26. October 1924.
- Images de Paris, Nos. 49-50, January-February 1924.
- Nos 56-57⁸, September-October 1924.
- Présence d'Apollinaire (Paris) Galerie Breton, December 1943 -
January 1944.
- Rimes et Raison, Paris, Editions de la Tête Noire, 1946.
- La Table Ronde No 57, September 1952.
- Le Flaneur des Deux Rives (Bulletin d'Etudes Apollinairiennes)
Nos 1-8, March 1954-September-December 1955.
- La Revue des Sciences Humaines, No 83, October-December 1956.
- La Revue des Lettres Modernes (series on Apollinaire) 1962 -1972,
Annually.
- Europe, November-December 1966.

BIBLIOGRAPHY - LIST OF OMISSIONSSECTION THREE

Fonteyne, André : Apollinaire Prosateur, Paris, 1964, Nizet.

SECTION FOUR

Chagall, Marc : Ma Vie, Paris, 1957, Stock. (Translated from the
Russian by Bella Chagall).